

Budget consultation questionnaire report 2016

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Strategic intelligence team

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Executive summary

- The 2016 consultation on Herefordshire Council's priorities and budget for 2017/18 ran from late July to early October 2016. The budget questionnaire was available online and hard copies were distributed at promotion events in the city and market towns.
- There were 280 responses to the questionnaire; 86 per cent of which were submitted online and 14 per cent were completed on paper.
- The majority of respondents (61 per cent) were willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation.
- Fifty three (53) per cent would support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds; 28 per cent would support an increase of council tax by 6.1 per cent, 10 per cent of respondents would support an increase of 8.3 per cent and 15 per cent of respondents would support an increase of 11.7 per cent.
- More than forty (40) per cent of respondents thought that their parish council should charge extra in order to carry out 'maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)' and 'grass / hedge cutting', while a third of respondents thought 'road / footpath maintenance', 'winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)' or 'litter / dog fouling enforcement' should be carried out with extra charge by their parish councils
- The most common activities that respondents currently volunteer are 'litter picking', 'helping out in emergencies', the 'good neighbour scheme' and 'supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities'.
- A large majority of respondents (76 per cent) thought the council could do more to 'improve infrastructure' to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses.

Introduction

The consultation on Herefordshire Council's priorities and budget for 2017/18 began on Friday 29 July 2016 and ended on Friday 7 October 2016. This report presents the key points from the analysis of responses received by 12 October. The consultation was published on the council's website with the following background documents:

- [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)
- [Directorate savings proposals](#)
- [Capital programme 2016/17](#)
- [Corporate plan 2016-2020](#)

Methodology

The budget consultation questionnaire was constructed and quality assured by a project team. The questionnaire was published on the Herefordshire Council website and residents were invited to complete it online. A printable version was made available on the website for residents who preferred to download, print and complete the questionnaire. Pre-printed questionnaires were also made available in libraries and customer service centres in the county. The consultation was promoted on the council's social media sites (Twitter and Facebook) and at events throughout the county.

This report presents the results of the combined online and paper responses to the questionnaire. The sample base is the number of respondents to the question and is the base from which percentages are calculated. The sample base used is specified for each question. Percentages are presented rounded to the nearest whole number in the tables; however, the charts are based on unrounded percentages.

Note that if respondents could select more than one answer to a particular question, the percentages may add up to more than 100 per cent.

Where comments have been provided these are listed in full but have been anonymised and corrected for spelling where appropriate.

There were a total of 280 responses to the questionnaire, of which 241 were submitted online and 39 were completed paper copies.

Results

The following analysis represents 280 responses received to the consultation questionnaire.

Please see **Appendix A** for all the comments and suggestions received to the questionnaire and **Appendix B** for the responses received as letters and e-mails to the consultation.

Q1. Are you willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation?

Sixty one (61) per cent of respondents were willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation.

Table 1: responses to question 1

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Yes	164	61%
No	103	39%
Total respondents	267	100%
Not answered	13	

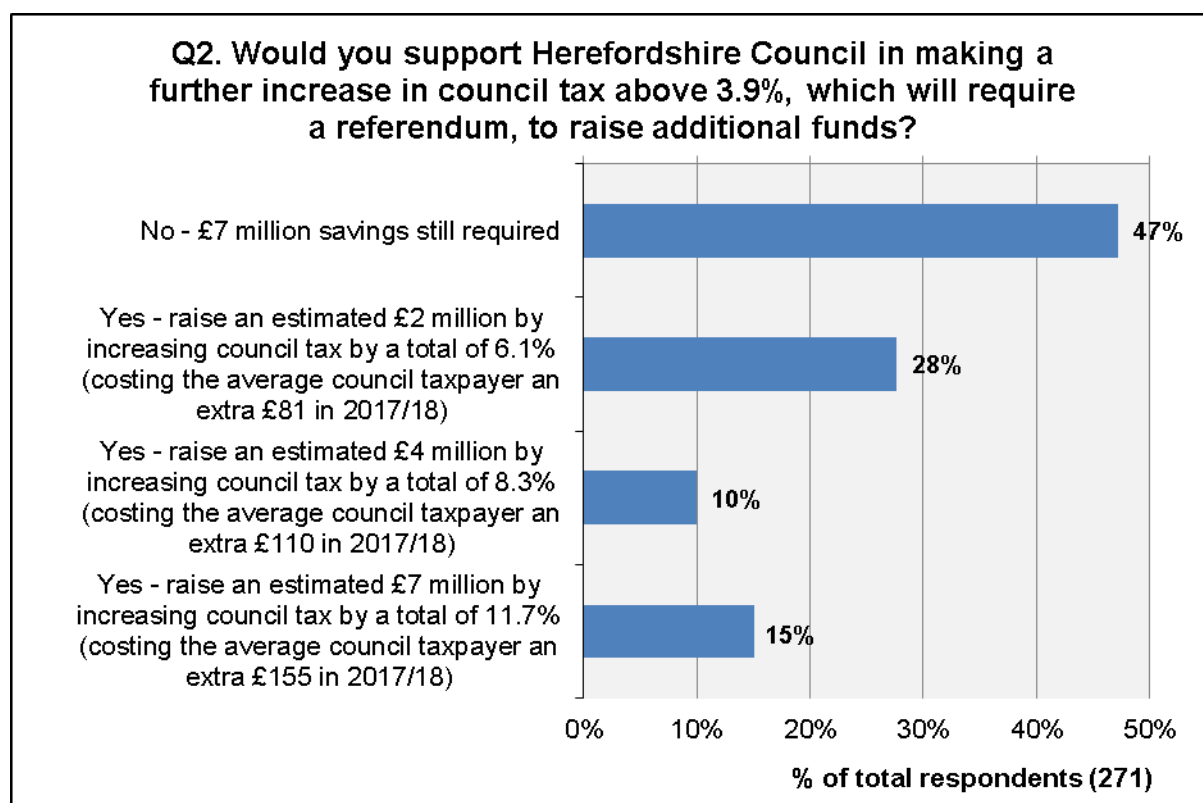
Q2. Would you support Herefordshire Council in making a further increase in council tax above 3.9%, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds?

Of the 271 respondents to this question, 143 respondents (53 per cent) would support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds. Forty seven (47) per cent (128 respondents) did not support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent.

Table 2: responses whether supporting for a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
No - £7 million savings still required	128	47%
Yes - raise an estimated £2 million by increasing council tax by a total of 6.1% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £81 in 2017/18)	75	28%
Yes - raise an estimated £4 million by increasing council tax by a total of 8.3% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £110 in 2017/18)	27	10%
Yes - raise an estimated £7 million by increasing council tax by a total of 11.7% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £155 in 2017/18)	41	15%
Total respondents	271	100%
Not answered	9	3%

Chart 1: would you support an increase of council tax above 3.9 percent?



Q3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings?

Analysis of this question indicated that frequently cited suggestions were around five themes:

- **Reduce council expenditures** (e.g. reviewing contracts and contract monitoring).
- **Reduce council in-house spending** (e.g. on salaries, expenses, staffing levels, subsidies, expenses, non-essentials, and improving systems, policies and procedures, and smarter working via technology).
- **Improve council management of assets** (e.g. sale of buildings and farms; reduce accommodation costs; encourage multiple use of buildings).
- **Generate income and increase revenue streams**
- **Merge with other local authorities and/or share design/delivery of front line services and back office functions**

The following word cloud highlights the most common words that featured in the general comments. Please see appendix A-Q3 for full list of comments.

Figure 1: word cloud showing responses to Q3
(size of word relates to the number of times it was mentioned)



Q4. Respondents to last year’s consultation suggested a number of activities that could be undertaken locally. Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following? (please tick all that apply)

Seventy seven (77) per cent of total survey respondents provided answers to question 4. Of these, over 40 per cent of respondents thought that their parish council should charge extra in order to carry out ‘maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)’ and ‘grass / hedge cutting’, while a third of respondents thought ‘road / footpath maintenance’, ‘winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)’ or ‘litter / dog fouling enforcement’ should be carried out through extra charges by their parish councils.

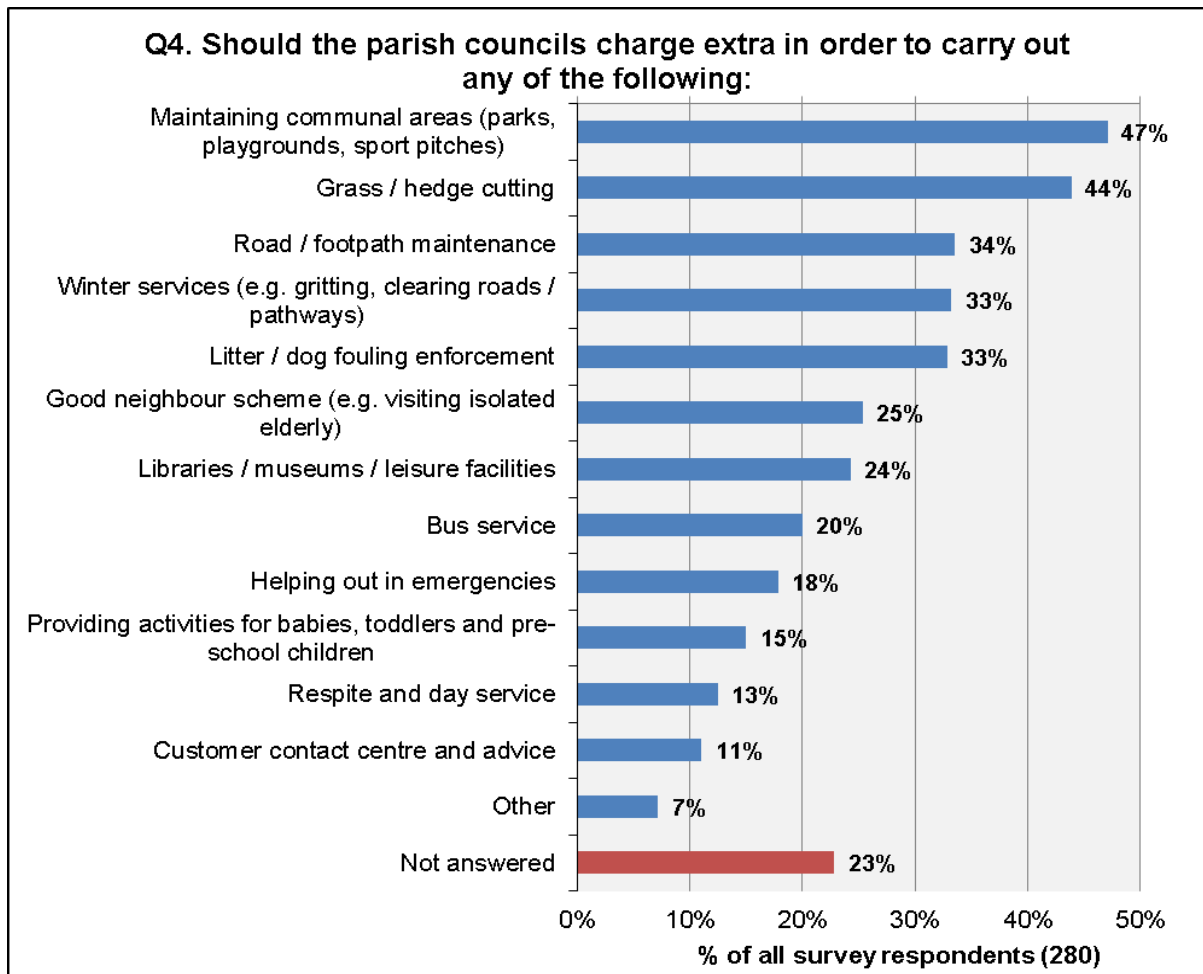
Nearly a quarter of residents (23 per cent) did not answer this question.

Further to question 4, respondents were asked to provide ‘other’ suggestions for activities that could be undertaken locally. There were 57 comments made. Of these, forty eight (48) per cent of respondents suggested that residents should not pay extra amount on top of their council tax because these activities and these are local government responsibilities. Please see appendix A-4a for full list of comments.

Table 3: responses to question 4

	Number of respondents	Per cent of all survey respondents*
Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)	132	47%
Grass / hedge cutting	123	44%
Road / footpath maintenance	94	34%
Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)	93	33%
Litter / dog fouling enforcement	92	33%
Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)	71	25%
Libraries / museums / leisure facilities	68	24%
Bus service	56	20%
Helping out in emergencies	50	18%
Providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children	42	15%
Respite and day service	35	13%
Customer contact centre and advice	31	11%
Other	20	7%
Not answered	64	23%
Total respondents	216	77%
*Total survey respondents	280	

Chart 2: should parish councils charge extra in order to provide some activities



Q5. Do you currently volunteer in Herefordshire?

Approximately fifty (50) per cent of respondents currently volunteer in Herefordshire.

Table 4: responses to volunteering

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Yes	130	49%
No	134	51%
Total respondents	264	100%
Not answered	16	

Q6. People have previously indicated that they would be willing to help out more in their community. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles. (please tick all that apply)

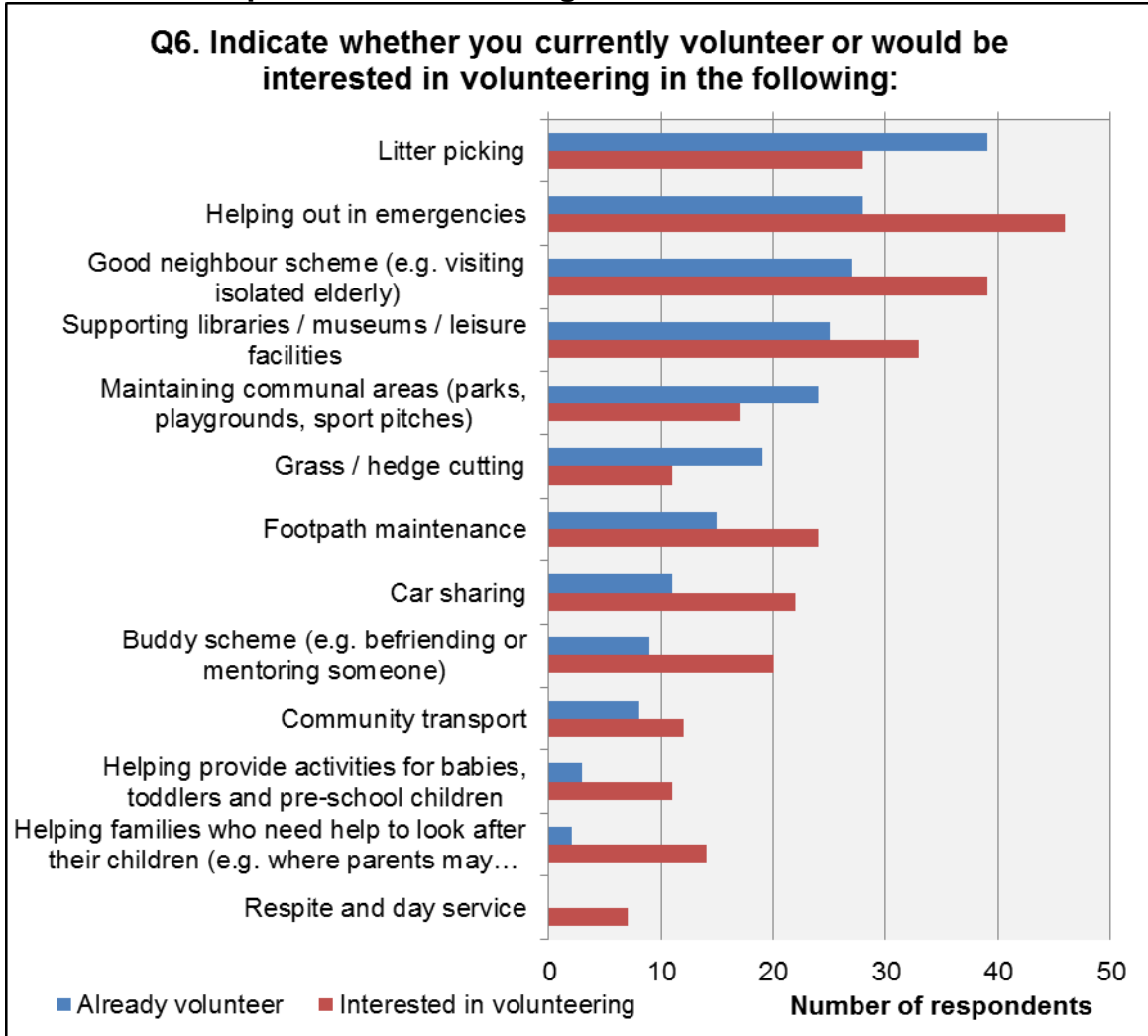
Please note because the numbers of responses are small, percentages have not been provided for this question.

The most common activities that respondents currently volunteer for are 'litter picking', 'helping out in emergencies', 'good neighbour scheme' and 'supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities'. While there is still a higher demand in volunteering in these activities, people are also interested to volunteer in 'footpath maintenance', 'car sharing' and 'buddy scheme'. According to table 5, 'respite and day service' is lacking in volunteers currently, however, seven respondents showed an interest to volunteering in future.

Table 5: responses to current and potential volunteering activities

	Already volunteer	Interested in volunteering	Not answered	Total respondents
Litter picking	39	28	213	67
Helping out in emergencies	28	46	206	74
Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)	27	39	214	66
Supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities	25	33	222	58
Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)	24	17	239	41
Grass / hedge cutting	19	11	250	30
Footpath maintenance	15	24	241	39
Car sharing	11	22	247	33
Buddy scheme (e.g. befriending or mentoring someone)	9	20	251	29
Community transport	8	12	260	20
Helping provide activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children	3	11	266	14
Helping families who need help to look after their children (e.g. where parents may need a lot of medical treatment)	2	14	264	16
Respite and day service	0	7	273	7
Other	34	0	246	34

Chart 3: current and potential volunteering activities



Other (please specify below):

There were 55 comments made to specify other volunteering activities that respondents currently carry out. Among these helping in a ‘community shop/charity organisation (e.g. Hereford Disability United, food bank)’, ‘village hall and church activities ‘ and ‘parish and town council’ were the most common activities that respondents are currently volunteering in. Four respondents suggested that they would be interested in providing ‘home base back office functions’, ‘vocational training’, ‘emergency road clearance’ and ‘work as a granger’.

Q7. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? (tick all that apply)

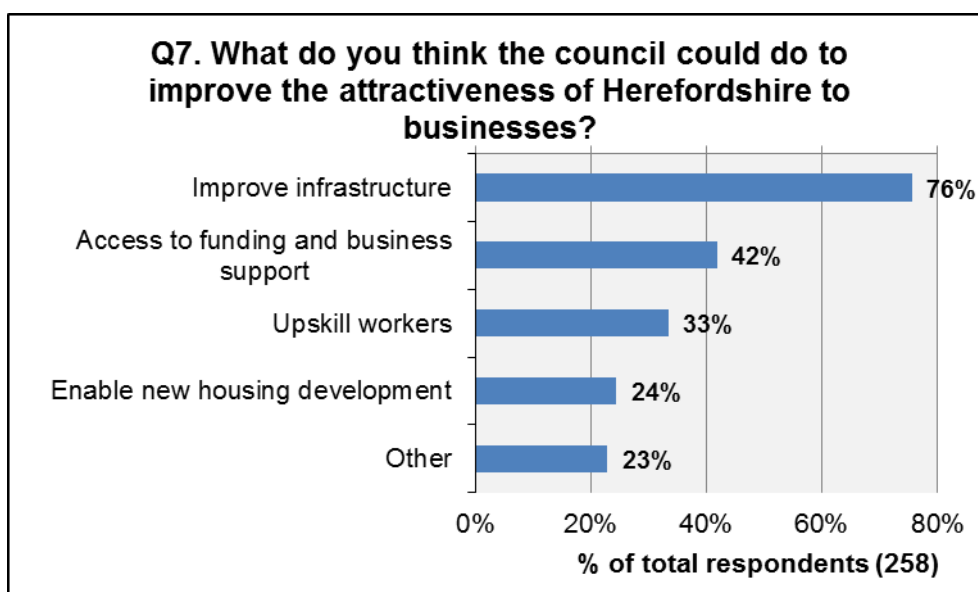
The majority of respondents (76 per cent) thought the council could ‘improve infrastructure’ in order to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses. ‘Access to funding and business support’ and ‘upskill workers’ also ranked highly.

There were 105 comments of ‘other’ suggestions. Among these, ‘better broadband and mobile phone coverage’, ‘improved transport network including better roads and Hereford bypass’ and ‘improved public transport’ were most commonly cited. The full list of comments can be found in appendix A-Q7.

Table 6: responses to question 7

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Improve infrastructure	195	76%
Access to funding and business support	108	42%
Upskill workers	86	33%
Enable new housing development	63	24%
Other	59	23%
Total respondents	258	100%
Not answered	22	

Chart 4: things that council could do to attract businesses to Herefordshire



The following word cloud highlights the most common words that featured in the ‘other’ suggestions.

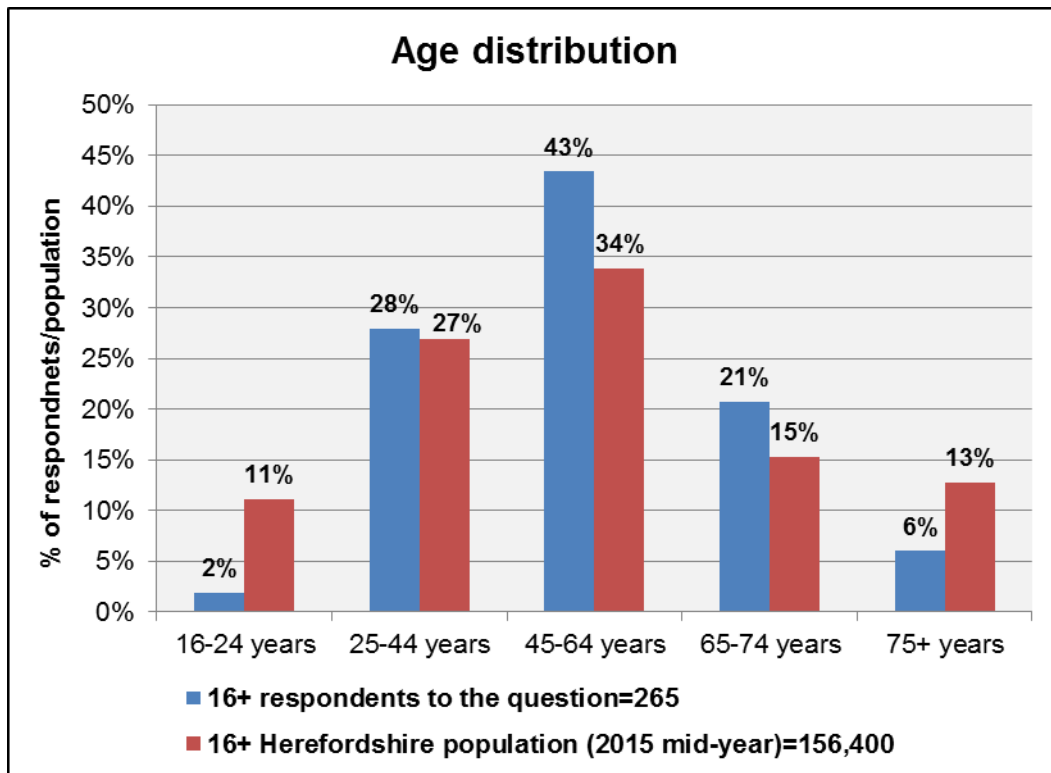
- **Change ways in how services/funding operate to reduce costs but keep services** (e.g. library service; health and social care; use of capital funding not revenue funding).
- **Improve council behaviours** (e.g. transparency of decisions; meaningful consultation with public).

Please see appendix A-Q9 for full list of comments.

Respondent profile

- Two per cent of respondents represented an organisation or a group while 98 per cent were individuals. The organisations that responded to the consultation were:
Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Group Parish Council
Ledbury Town Council
Orleton Parish Council
Richards Castle PC
Rural business organisation and
'Anonymous organisation'
- 52 per cent of respondents to the survey were males and 48 per cent were females (Herefordshire population profile: 51 percent to 49 percent)¹
- 27 per cent were aged 65 years or over, 43 per cent were aged 45-64 years, 28 per cent were aged 25-44 years and two per cent were 24 years or younger. According to chart 5 it is clear that people aged 45-64 years were over represented in the consultation.

Chart 5: age distribution of survey respondents and Herefordshire population



¹ The Population of Herefordshire 2016 (<https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/48832/population-of-herefordshire-2016-v20.pdf>)

- Twelve (12) per cent of respondents' day-to-day activities were limited a little or limited a lot because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 month.
- Ninety five (95) per cent of respondents identified themselves as English, Scottish, Welsh or British; three per cent identified themselves as another national identity.
- Of the respondents who answered the question about their ethnicity, 98 per cent identified themselves as 'white' and one percent as 'other white'. This composition is slightly different to the adult population ethnicity profile of the county, where five per cent were 'other white' and two per cent were 'non-white' (according to the 2011 Census).
- Six (6) per cent of respondents felt that they had been treated differently (positively or negatively) because of who they are.

End

Appendix A: Full list of comments

Appendix B: Other form of responses to the consultation

Appendix C: The questionnaire

Appendix A-Full list of comments

Introduction

This report shows the comments made by residents to budget consultation 2016 questionnaire. Some of the comments have been edited to preserve anonymity, where this has been done the changes are marked within < >. Any remarks added by data entry personnel are shown in parenthesis, for example [comment illegible].

Note: Some of the comments refer to the statement number in the questionnaire. Where necessary, please refer to the questionnaire in appendix B.

Appendix A-Q3

Q3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings? There were 140 comments made.

Comments
1. More rigorous and specific requirements when tendering for services and ensuring these are being met. I am amazed at the lack of the above which does not constitute a quality job therefore not cost effective. 2. Reduce expense of county councillors. 3. Stop having a budget for 'entertaining' e.g. complementary food and drink.
A charge made for householders who do not recycle, either at all or correctly. Increase charges for Leisure Centre etc. use. My family and I don't use any of these facilities, and we are fed up with subsidising others. Charge for on road parking in towns such as Ledbury and Leominster. Do we really need the twin town scheme, in the advent of the Brexit vote?
A road sweeper drives up the middle of the white cross terraces, early in the mornings, it does absolutely nothing, cars are parked either side of all the streets and the middle of the road doesn't need sweeping. This is a dreadful waste of resources.
A significant decrease in council staffing levels.
Apply the Spend to Save principal to restore grants to the charity (3rd) sector in particular to Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) which provides a service which by its preventative/advice work saves the council money and brings an extra £3-4 million each year to the benefit of its clients and the general economy of Herefordshire
Be very clear about what can and can't be delivered in council services. Be upfront about the challenges and choices so people really understand why they can't expect to have services previously delivered unless they are comfortable with paying more. Explain which services have had budget cuts and which ones could also contribute more to still enable the council to deliver services considered critical.
Bureaucracy within council departments. Scrap silly schemes like high town improvements
Cancel the Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) contract and bring the work "in house". No private company = no need to make profit. Cut back on services for social care
Capitalise on existing assets, but please don't sell them all off. Farm holdings should not have been sold off. It is not necessary to spend on refurbishing High Town that is a luxury that should not be put ahead of services to Herefordshire residents. Herefordshire is a beautiful county and there are so many tourism opportunities that are being ignored.
Cease work with Hoople, Balfour Beatty.
Change provider Balfour Beatty

Comments

Charge every household some council tax. Single and lower earners and severely disabled could still have the 25% (or more for severely disabled) allowance but not if there is more than one income (to include job seekers etc.) in the household. Charges also to "seasonal workers" on farms where their use of refuse collection etc. and they earning should be taken into account. They are living in accommodation; usually mobile homes rented from the farmer, and should pay something whilst in this country. Otherwise, suggest farmers should be council tax on each mobile home on their land.

Charge more to the owners of stray dogs. £55 plus the cost of kennel isn't even as high as an £80 fixed penalty notice for dropping a cigarette butt and sending people to collect stray dogs takes up a lot more time and effort. Every dog should now be micro-chipped - do the council apply an additional fine if people claim a dog which is also not micro-chipped?

Charge or suggest a charge for people with free bus passes. This could be done by putting a donation box onto each bus and displaying a recommended fair. The money should be used to maintain local bus services.

Check what people quote for and the price. Remember local contractors to the job are a lot cheaper. Check the job is done correct first time and the contractors do not have to go back and repair it a few weeks or months after finished and passed. I saw a job done and I said to the person who I had phoned about the fault, phoned me to ask if finished. I said yes they have finished but it will not pass. It did not pass and I said I hope the council do not have to pay for the second time. That is place money is wasted.

Close final salary pension schemes to further accrual

Consider capital spend more robustly. Be more creative with service provision- e.g. sharing buildings. Support recruit internally- and voluntary cost saving/service redesign could be considered to contribute to savings. Stop subsidies to parish councils. Rationalise the number of councillors. Seek more external third party investment from national scheme.

Consider the asset list and sell any titles (e.g. Lord of the Manor of XXX), works of art, property surplus. Consider reducing the public road network by declassifying roads serving less than (say) three properties and making them unmaintained. Ensure that all businesses especially those registered to residential addresses are considered by valuation office for payment of business rates; initially concentrate on those who are VAT registered.

Comments
<p>Continually making more and more cuts to existing service provision is unsustainable. Continually re-engineering and re-procuring statutory services achieves very little in the long run other than to provide commissioning staff with something to fill their days. The time has come for a step change in the county. It's quite clear that Herefordshire is not large enough to sustain a unitary authority and all the responsibilities that come with that position. The decision to form a unitary authority was taken at a different time when government funding was at a far higher level and the demographic pressures were not as high. The obvious next step is the explore a more regional approach - a re marriage to Worcestershire (or linking up with other neighbouring authorities). Surely that is a no-brainer as it would enable senior management and back office costs to be cut significantly as well as enabling scarce expertise (e.g. social workers) to be shared across the region thereby improving the standard of services and making the available funds go further in terms of supporting essential front line services (social services and waste is about all that's left really...). By reducing the number of councillors and the admin to support them the savings could be re-directed to existing parish councils who could take on responsibility for more local services to improve the quality of life and surroundings. I would be willing to pay more council tax for those sorts of services where I can see and feel the improvement, but I won't pay for lots of service commissioners who are just re-organising the deck chairs on the titanic. Sadly I don't think I could trust Herefordshire Council (HC) to take a leading role in such a change, so I think council tax should be left at the existing level until the council becomes financially unsustainable and central government have no option but to drive through the changes needed.</p>
<p>Continue to fund and support children's health services School Nursing and Health visiting!</p>
<p>Control spending in Adult and Children Directorates.</p>
<p>Cut all expenses to councillor</p>
<p>Cut back on the ridiculous salaries some of the executives are paid.</p>
<p>Cut contracts with lazy 'outsource' suppliers (Balfour Beatty?) Seek sponsorship/advertising revenue from major retailers. Cut council executive pay further. Cut council staffing levels and integrate departments. Re-amalgamate with Worcestershire. Stop spending on 'vanity' projects.</p>
<p>Cut down on councillors expenses</p>
<p>cut librarians and have volunteers in all libraries</p>
<p>Cut salaries at the top. Is <name removed> really worth the money he is being paid?</p>
<p>Cut some of the office jobs and top salaries. They are way over paid.</p>
<p>Cut the pension provision for staff</p>
<p>Defer the renovation and decoration of council buildings until an easier financial time. Combine services into the same venues, where reasonably possible, freeing buildings for rent.</p>
<p>Don't spend money on traveller's sites- they don't pay tax. Don't know enough detailed info on what the council does spend money on to inform this. Only generic areas in the reported accounts.</p>

Comments
<p>Drastically reduce public libraries with a few supervisors and volunteers and no librarians as they cost nearly £250,000, charges for internet access. A reduction in middle management to preserve the essential services that are a life line to so many.</p>
<p>Encourage communities to take on some services or pool resources with the voluntary sector. This could for instance cover Libraries and Advice centres run as part of village halls and their volunteers. Teenagers and young adults, if able, to be asked to run youth services as part of any benefits receivable; that'd enable useful work experience. Lobby to have the Libraries Act 1964 changed to a less prescriptive model more suited to the Web-age for enabling Libraries to be locally run by volunteers.</p>
<p>Ensure all staff retire at 65 or similar levels as in the private sector. to include, police, and fire services. The council pension scheme for all employees to be reduced to a similar level as the average in the private sector. This should be a long term plan to reduce expenditure.</p>
<p>Enter a merger, or strategic partnership, with Shropshire Council on all back office functions. Two councils with one media team, commissioning team, business rates team etc. Both authorities could then have access to an appropriately resourced and sized staff whilst also realising substantial savings.</p>
<p>Further efficiency savings in large service area e.g. adult social care. Whilst appreciate that these services are statutory there should be opportunity to make some efficiency savings.</p>
<p>Generate means to increase revenue on a macro level. Primarily this means encourage business and businesses into the county and look after the ones that are there. There is virtually no support for new businesses / growth businesses available and there is in other areas - how can this be possible?</p>
<p>Get rid of unnecessary staff. Consolidate services, which would improve performance and reduce the need for so many offices. I have seen many council workers doing little to nothing but being paid for the privilege. Start cutting the deadwood by looking at management level employees. Sell off buildings that are no longer needed for offices or turn them into student accommodation for the new university. This way you'd make money for years to come. Also, get a move on with the sale of the Tennant farms. If you are going to sell them, do so. Stop fanning around. Set an achievable value, get the letters sent out and put these poor sods out of their misery. By setting an achievable price, you'll sell them quickly, make your money and not be stuck with land you can't sell or lease. Hanging on for one buyer for the lot is folly. Unless, of course, Prince Charles is waiting in the wings.</p>
<p>Get some better advice on external contracts, e.g. Balfour Beatty. Study your management costs - do you have a regular high-level management review?</p>
<p>Greater delegation to town and parish councils to deliver the most vital services (bus service, libraries, road/footpath maintenance)</p>
<p>Has the council considered sharing the learning from areas of the service that have seen a reduction in budget while service has improved?</p>

Comments
<p>Heating, air conditioning and lighting in the buildings, this is not effective as it can be, some buildings have heating on when some of the rooms are empty and when it is warm outside. Buildings used more effectively outside of normal working hours make them easier to access to allow private organizations to hire. Merge library services and children's centre services and make them community hubs, involve the public in having ownership of the buildings. Revamp the council website and WISH Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire) service, WISH to run their 'Shop' from a council building instead of paying for a shop.</p>
<p>Herefordshire council tax rates are the highest among the west of England councils, look to neighbouring councils to see if lessons can be learnt. Consider sharing services with other councils e.g. help desks services.</p>
<p>I am unsure what the financial running costs are of the council, however I am sure that there are cuts that can be made internally.</p>
<p>I don't know enough about how the council spends its money to offer a sensible opinion.</p>
<p>I note the proposals to introduce on street parking charges in central Hereford and to increase parking charges at other public car parks - which I approve of. Does the county have powers:</p> <p>(a) to require supermarkets such as Sainsbury's to levy parking charges (removing the 2/3 hour free parking "privilege" that shoppers currently enjoy), and</p> <p>(b) to benefit from some or all of the resulting revenues, after deduction of costs of collection?</p>
<p>I think it is really important that the council, together with other councils, should lobby central government more effectively to make the point that they are bearing the brunt of the government's austerity measures. We have already lost services that I regard as essential for a civilised, caring society. The voluntary sector is being expected to fill gaps that really should be funded by taxation. The tone of the leaders of government has changed; will this be reflected in a change of strategy?</p>
<p>I think the council should encourage local parish councils to make use of the skills of local residents in running morning coffee or afternoon tea clubs with a theme such as gardening, crafts, photography etc. This would help combat isolation and keep residents more healthy and build up friendships and working relationships with the local population and assist the good neighbour schemes. Encourage those who use sports fields etc. to form a rota to cut the grass and provide help with maintenance of machines.</p>
<p>I work in the private sector and always think there is too much red tape associated with anything the council does. It must be possible to make decisions without loads of consultations etc. etc. taking time and money.</p>

Comments

I would have agreed to increases in council tax if it was a fair tax which quite clearly it is not. The rich in large houses pay little more than the poor in small houses. I would agree to an increase in local taxation if it was progressive e.g. local income tax rather than regressive as it is now. The questions above are pointless because if you think the present council tax system is unfair you have no alternative but to oppose increases that will hurt the poor most while the wealthy won't be affected. I would like to pay more for social services etc. but can't agree to an increase in tax that is regressive where the poor suffer most. The problem is with central government who won't effectively tax large corporations and the wealthy.

In the long-term, I think it makes sense to take a broad look at service delivery, and to think 'outside the box' in terms of how we achieve our aims. In particular, to: - encourage an environment of close co-working between departments, to find 'win-win' situations, and prioritise effectively:

- look at possibilities for the council to be income-generating in its activities (not charging for basic services provided, but for added value - e.g. energy from waste)

- look at council assets, how these can be maintained in partnership with the community, and where the use of these could be maximised either for income generating, or for achieving council aims (assets to be retained where possible, and if transferred, then only with careful prioritisation)

- build up a reputation as a leader in sustainability and the arts - engage with people, and encourage participation in decision-making and community life. In the short term it seems inevitable that there will be cuts to service delivery.

I don't want to be idealistic, but I do think it should be done carefully, particularly bearing in mind how each decision affects the most vulnerable. Services which can be delivered in partnerships with other organisations or communities can and should be explored, but only if done well (i.e. not 'dumped on' people, but with a period of 'hand-holding': sharing visions, communicating well, showing leadership, building capacity... ultimately empowering others).

Instead of cutting, look to expand and grow, providing more services that a fee can be charged for.

Introduce a tax for all vehicles using Hereford city centre. Especially HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicles). Ban HGV traffic from A roads (damage to surface and hedgerows).

Introduce a tax for all vehicles using Hereford city centre. Especially HGV. Ban HGV traffic from A Roads (damage to surface and hedgerows).

It's hard to be involved in the local government. If you had put the council tax up year on year maybe you won't be in such a mess. Work with the government and let's get this sorted!!

Keep parking charges to a minimum. Lack of public transport requires people to drive in to the city. Please remember we live in a rural area.

Ledbury town council suggests that Herefordshire Council re-negotiates the BBLP contract.

Less capital spending which has recurrent spending implications

Comments
Less money spent on constant internal changes dreamt up by people without real jobs serving the residents
Less top level council staff - or take pay cuts like the rest of us. Considerably less independent advisers. Use the surveys you've already got. They seem to have covered everything over the years - just multiply the numbers by some percentage.
Lobby central government for a demographic driven grant, Herefordshire has a very high proportion of over 65's and this puts and disproportionate and unfair burden on council funds.
Lobby government for the cuts from central government not to be made.
Lobby government hard to obtain a higher level of rate support and removal of arbitrary restrictions.
Lobby the conservative government to give more money as we are an agricultural county without the residents to support these increases and cuts. Our rural economy would not support this proposal for increase in council tax.
Look at cutting in-house spending i.e. the need for higher management positions and high salaries for such a small county. The need to keep moving offices every couple of decades. Fill the many empty shops by offering a reduced rent level and encourage people to shop locally by free 2 hour parking. People are reluctant to pay money to spend money i.e. why would I drive past the many DIYs offering free parking to queue and pay to use Phillip Morris for example. Local shops are disadvantaged by being located in town centres.
Look at the salaries that are paid out for higher council executives and managers. They are very high compared to the average wage earned in Herefordshire.
Make all market town car parks free which would increase business takings and increase business tax to a level in excess of the lost income.
Make management cuts and reduce management salaries and create a cap on salaries.
Make parish councils pay more for things that benefit them I.e. local tourism to their area.
Make the website simpler to use for signing up for direct debits. It would not work consequently you had to foot the cost of producing and sending me a pin number. We have to recycle at home, but at the tip in Ross the plastic is mixed in landfill which will cost you money in landfill taxes.
Manage contractors more professionally - noted to be very slack during repairs to council owned buildings. Reduce travel by use of video-conferencing and Skype etc. Review and reduce burdensome paperwork when delivering services. Check eligibility for welfare very carefully (but fairly).
Maybe consider management officials savings?!
More effective working relationships with third sector providers

Comments
More promotion in hiring rooms in council buildings. Stop thinking 'banking hours' and think 24/7. More road shows promoting what we do.
Not at this time. It would help though that devices to repair the atrocious 3rd world state of the roads is addressed or residents might not want to stay here into retirement and beyond.
Only do enough tree cutting, grass cutting, etc. that is really needed for public safety and the safety of road users. A lot of areas can remain uncut - this also assists nature - bees in particular, which Herefordshire relies on for its apples and other pollinator crops. Do not change light bulbs in street lighting - but keep enough changed to ensure safety. A lot of other council actually switch off street lighting during certain hours of the night e.g. from midnight to 5.00 a.m. All of these small amounts of savings add up.
Pay cut for staff
Paying for library requests
Perhaps you could protect essential care services by including a voluntary buy-in for non-essential (premium) services. In effect, you would have a two or three tiered buy-in and run membership systems for libraries, museums, theatres and transport options. Rather like the way supermarkets have three tiers of quality (Basics, everyday and taste the difference). You would still give free or subsidized access for anyone on benefits or below/above a specific age group. You need to phase in digitizing services for elderly people. We are nearly at a point where those becoming pensioners will have the technical knowhow and personal computers to be able to access information online (library services, timetables, tourist information) we're not quite there, but we are only a decade away. You could also include a section on your council tax bill for a voluntary one-off or monthly overpayment for those who feel they can give to the council's charitable and voluntary areas, such as food banks, in bloom etc.
Powys council has had to find a lot more than you. Look at efficiencies in house. Cut number of big wigs earning a lot of money. Look a buying fuel with other councils same for school books etc. Forming buying groups for lorries, fuel cars, stationary, and postage. When highways contract is up for renewal look to a 5 day week but Wednesday - Sunday and Monday - Friday so that all vehicles have no days stood still so less vehicles required
Prevention is key; reduce adult social care expenditure by keeping people living independently for as long as possible. Keep the population healthy, physically active, healthy eating, simple measures we can all achieve but produce massive savings. Preventing the younger population becoming older and dependent, working together across agencies and partners to achieve the same outcomes.

Comments
<p>Prioritise statutory services (libraries, social care) over non-statutory services (tourism). Prioritise transport (roads and busses). Cut back on office accommodation costs (acres of unused space in Plough Lane for example). More home working and hot-desking for officers. Re-locate more functions to cheaper accommodation in the market towns. Use technology more - conference calls, skype meetings etc. Review all private sector contracts, and re-negotiate at lower rates - take it or leave it, most businesses will take it! Use more interns as office assistants - a great training opportunity at minimum wage. Cut the pay of the CEO (Chief executive Officer) and all senior officers by 10%, and ring-fence the savings for top priorities. Launch public fund-raising appeals for key priority areas. Design a structured giving programme to enable the better off to donate on voluntary basis to the priorities of their choice. Challenge the whole bankrupt philosophy of austerity - badger the Chancellor. It hasn't worked, and we have had enough. Talk to local communities more - hear what they are saying and act on it.</p>
<p>Publicly lobby central government for an end to austerity and reduced levels of local government funding, working with other local authorities. Use all of the council's cash reserves before passing on reduced central government funding burden to local residents.</p>
<p>Q2- Use extra to pay down debt. Re-join Worcestershire. High level of elderly & others in need in Herefordshire, but low level of good manners to pay for many on benefits. Tax needs to come from somewhere. Or combine council admin (higher-paid levels) in West Mercia Councils. Too many bosses.</p>
<p>Raise the charges of bus fares but only by 10p or something small but try to put services that have been cut and would be used back into place. Keep the libraries open please</p>
<p>Re evaluate the red tape around some of the council's regulations. A part time employee of the council could be allocated to each parish council whose role it would be to develop a neighbourhood plan and to be constantly identifying areas of financial savings, taking local recommendations for savings back to the council for approval. This way each part of the county could initiate good practice, which is tailor made to the local residents and environment, meanwhile making savings.</p>
<p>Re negotiates or cancels your contract with Balfour Beatty which appears to give them the right to withdraw a service and arbitrarily dump it onto parish councils or local communities. When they test the market to replace BBLP they find local suppliers are less than half the cost of your supposedly competitive contract prices.</p>
<p>Reduce adult care budget and concentrate on getting business rates up.</p>
<p>Reduce cost of adult social care</p>
<p>Reduce costly office moves, sell off old property instead of putting it all in the skip and reduce salary scale for all directors or reduce the number of directors across the council</p>
<p>Reduce costs by reducing HR (Human Resources) costs, appraisals for staff and other staff time wasting measures, get on with delivering services to the public.</p>
<p>Reduce costs by reducing HR costs, appraisals for staff and other staff time wasting measures, get on with delivering services to the public , libraries and bus services etc.</p>

Comments
Reduce executive officers pay scales by 8.3%
Reduce job creation schemes such as appraisals x 4 a year and other wasteful in house corporate nonsense. Staff can then focus on providing services to the public!
Reduce members allowances and IT (Information Technology) allowances. Reduce frequency of refuse and recycling collections
Reduce spending on cycle paths which very few use
Reduce spending on grass cutting by offering inducements to residents to maintain areas outside their properties-such as free swimming or parking vouchers.
Reduce the number of senior managers you employ. Use a different company instead of Hoople who charge a fortune. Merge with Worcestershire council
Reduce the pay of most highly paid executives until it much closer to that of ordinary staff. Rigorously check that private contracting is more cost effective than working in house. If you are being forced to contract out by central government policy, let us know.
Reduce the wages for executives, stop running silly business courses where 'consultants' teach the obvious. Do away with contracts with oversized and out of county organisations take profit on minimum wage jobs.
Reduce unnecessary red tape and process to allow the council to transfer more assets or services to the community or voluntary sector.
Reduce your own offices and wages to higher members!
Remember the smaller towns, for example Ross-on-Wye. The county council seems more concerned with the city of Hereford then what is happening in the smaller towns. We are the only town that has taken on a number of assets so we are saving you thousands. Also planning notices should be advertised with the local paper, the Ross Gazette. This will save you money as Hereford Times is expensive and no one in Ross reads it!
Remuneration of senior staff. Better medium to long term planning. Fund raising amongst wealthier to provide particularly for one off/capital projects. Education/use of PR (Public Relations) and social media to educate people on implications of wastage/misuse of public services esp. in NHS, police services, etc.
Review higher salaries of senior members of council staff and cost of consultants/project managers
Review if all staff is actually required. Reducing staff numbers will generate savings. Review the quality of work by contractors. Too many poor substandard jobs being done which require early repair.
Review salaries, pension provision etc. for council employees.
Sack all cabinet members and let the elected members make the decisions.

Comments
Sell all the farms presently owned by the council. These are not in the interests of the vast majority of Herefordshire's population. The days of smallholding farms have gone and we should not have to subsidise those that farm them.
Share services with other authorities. E.g. Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire Service.
Shared services with other neighbouring authorities, including Wales.
Shelve optional capital schemes.
Spend less on outsourcing/consultancies and private companies - reinvest in local people working for the council not private companies working for themselves.
Stop BBLP wasting our money and do the job that they are being paid for. If they are not going to do what they are being paid for then don't give them the money. That should save quite a bit.
Stop carrying out costly retendering and procurement exercises where existing providers can be re-contracted.
Stop employing 'interims' consultants by any other name. These people are paid high salaries come up with ideas then disappear and leave other staff to deal with the consequences of their schemes.
Stop moving offices. Stop paying for projects that don't work - i.e. IT at Plough Lane.
Stop paying staff, which are suspended, full pay. Reduce the amount paid in sickness to staff - the rest of us get paid nothing when we are ill, and we resent paying people what we do not get ourselves.
Stop spending on a Hereford University - we have sufficiently good further education system, this is an ego-trip. Stop spending on the arts, e.g. Courtyard, they should be self-sufficient Stop spending on unnecessary 'what-ifs' like the westerly by-pass, over the past decade so much money has been mis-spent.
Stop spending on vanity projects in Hereford
Stop trying to increase the size of Hereford, the congestion is through traffic not visitors. Town has nothing to offer as most shops are the same thing (coffee). Ripping up town centre will do nothing for shops unless the rates come down. Bypass should of been done years ago will not get done on time or budget, but should of sorted a bridge crossing first (40 years ago). Trying to draw new businesses into Hereford will not come from all this due to poor connections to motorways, it will still take as long to get through town than Belmont to Aber!
Stop vanity projects like the relief road. Ensure value for money from things like resurfacing high town. Probity of councillors is a major issue - some of the planning decisions recently have looked very like cronyism. Fewer councillors required. Council should be protecting public toilets, libraries, rather than expensive projects / feathering the nests of councillors.

Comments
<p>Stop wasteful spending on new roads i.e. inner 'relief road' and from Ross road to Abergavenny road. Stop wasting money on office moves. Improve general efficiency. Council is very poor value for money. Sell Rotherwas estate to raise capital. Raise rent of new cattle market to yield margin of 3%.</p>
<p>Stop wasting money on re-branding. Stop paying BB too much money for cutting grass, which they never do.</p>
<p>Stop wasting money on silly ideas</p>
<p>Stop wasting public funds on ridiculous schemes that only benefit a few /or are a complete waste. The High Town refurb was a waste. The Inner Link Road is a road to no-where - another waste and already over budget!! The planned SLR (Southern Link Road) is another waste as it won't relieve congestion. You lot can't be trusted to spend our money wisely so why should we give you any more to fritter away on vanity projects?</p>
<p>Support energy efficiency serves, low carbon transportation options etc.</p>
<p>The council should fight their (our corner harder with the government). It is unacceptable that councils like Birmingham, Liverpool, and Tower Hamlets have money thrown at them in the billions, and we are starved of cash to subsidise them.</p>
<p>The council should look at the process it uses to deliver the vital services. Loads of money is wasting not looking at the services it provides to those who actually need adjustments, correspondence out to people who are no longer living at the address and they are aware of this as new info has been given to put on database, they do not send out correct format letters to those who need alternative formats. The money spent on chasing fly tippers should be spent on opening tip hours longer and making one day a day that business can take a small amount of waste for a charge to the tip such as £10 for a small trailer of items of waste. There should be greater integration of service information so that five systems are not being used for services which all use the same information taken by one. The council is then paying five licence fees for the service uses when only one will suffice. Spend less money on the frivolous cafe and perks for the staff at plough lane; spend equal amounts of money giving all staff workable conditions, not palace style facilities making the working conditions too comfy that staff don't work to full potential. Look at the processes used and instead of starting the process for each department from a high level. Why not look at it from a ground level from a resident /user place and build it around them, rather than some fancy expensive system that cost loads of money doesn't meet half the needs required and is then out of date and near useless in 18 months. Bring staff up through the departments encourage growth in staff teams already in council rather than pay stupid money to bring in people only interested in money not the council and area they have been born and bred in and care for. The involvement of young students out of university is good idea but make sure they work with experienced people who know the area and not ready to destroy it by bringing in ideas not relevant to the council surroundings. Basically look at the services that are run from the ground level not from the ivory tower where no one is actually impacted by them. Work from bottom up, experience the services as an individual for a week without being a Cllr or manager, ride the bus first thing in morning or at school home time or workers home time. Talk to the people who use all on daily basis and then look at cuts not from those who have no real use of it and just use occasionally. Speak to people in person on surprise visit on buses do not advertise.</p>

Comments
The council should look to its own processes, costs and inefficiencies before penalising residents.
The council should stop making Voluntary Redundancies and then employing the same staff as 'consultants'. There are staffs that have taken redundancy but are then re-employed. The practice should stop. Stop paying so much 'sick pay'. Six months on full pay then six months half pay based on service is unsustainable. Times are hard and most people under pressure but how many other organisations offer this? Lets look at Franklin House. How often and how much for the several refits? Now all wasted as the council will now spend way too much extending and refitting Blueschool House. Then there is the bad deal with Elgar House, Why after signing a lease is Herefordshire Council now footing the bill for asbestos removal? Another total waste of council tax payer's money. These saving could be made with better judgement and actually paying due diligence.
The infrastructural maintenance in the county is disproportionate to the total population and a one-size-fits all allocation of spend does not treat all people fairly across the country. To address London/southeast cantered bias it is essential the council prevail on the central government to fund Herefordshire take into account the sparseness of the county's population and the undue costs of upkeep to maintain services in such a widely spread community.
The link to budget consultation page does not work so I cannot give an informed opinion.
The parish council is concerned that whilst deep and harmful cuts are being made to all services, there are still numerous examples of wasteful inefficiencies which we see in operations, for example the poor standard of verge-cutting, inefficiencies in how potholes are repaired and to what standard. At this time of crisis, there should also be reductions in the salaries of the very highest-paid staff of the Council, to help contribute to savings and lead by example.
This survey is poorly designed and ultimately will produce results that are little, if any real value. If you want to identify meaningful views from council tax payers you should ask questions about willingness to pay more money for council tax services only once relevant information about implications of different budget choices have been provided. For example, if you are in favour of no current increase in budget above 3.9% then the implications of the likely £7 million of cuts should be explained. What services would be cut? What actions are being taken to examine where administrative savings can be made? If respondents are provided with this information then more realistic responses will be provided. Similarly I might be inclined to register a positive response to increasing the budget above 3.9% if I was given an idea of where this extra money was to be spent. By not providing this information (or at least an indication of where you expect to spend this money) the question is of little value.
Use capital funding wherever possible to fund (e.g.) planned highway maintenance, and scrap controversial vanity projects such as the Hereford bypass
Use of less agency staff by improving conditions for permanent staff
Work closer with the voluntary sector, seeing if positions can be of a voluntary capacity, and pay contracts to not for profit organisations and see if those organisations can get funding support from funding bodies to make them more efficient?

Comments

Yes, put the car park prices down, it's driving people away and for people that work in town it's a tax on the high street worker. In wales where ever they did this car park revenues went up because more people came rather than empty car parks and shops. We are a rural town bike lanes won't help the traffic at all get on and build the link roads bypass as soon as possible creating jobs etc. Stop wasting money redoing high town to match new market, any one I speak to can't believe this huge amount of money as wasted!!

Yes. When observing a pothole that has been advised and needing filling. I understand from Balfour Beatty that if its not of the correct size (depth + width) not considered by someone to meet the criteria then it isn't filled, but is reported and noted. I can't imagine how much this procedure must cost! Why not fill it while someone is there looking at it! The roads are in a dreadful state in Herefordshire and more funding from the budget needs to go towards repairs.

Appendix A-Q4

Q4a. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following? Other, please specify: There were 57 comments made

Comments
All of the above should be taken care of from our council tax.
All the above are desirable, but it is stopping Herefordshire Council doing its jobs properly. I am a chairman of a parish council, and we should not be doing Herefordshire's job. We already do some of the above.
All the above are the responsibility of government NOT the citizens collection of taxes due from big business should sort out the shortfall here
Although the parishes may have powers they would in most cases not have the available resources to operate what are in most cases county council responsibilities. If a parish does take on these works the county council should restore the parish council tax support scheme.
Citizens advice / advice on council services
Create safe options for cycling
Homeless services
I agree parish councils could do more, but am concerned it could contribute to a 'postcode lottery' in living standards... What parish councils can offer might vary hugely between different areas.
I assume any additional funds raised would be enough to hire somebody to undertake these tasks in the community.
I don't think 'Road / footpath maintenance' and 'Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)' should be on the list at all. It would fragment services. The town/parish councils could then cross their fingers and hope! And would they hire the machines? And what about the stockpile of material for gritting - who would decide the amount to get (buy)? The Kington Centre already provides a council advice centre and activities for small children - isn't this still part of the library service?
I think these are essentials that should come out of council tax revenue.
If some of the above are going to be charged extra for - why pay council tax?!!
Introduce a local fair taxation system and I would agree to increases
Invest in more bicycle lanes
It will cost each parish more to buy individually as they have no buying power
Keeping drains, ditches etc. clear to reduce risk of flooding and providing activities for older residents like coffee/tea clubs etc.
Keeping the town clean and tidy is important for tourism as well as residents. Many parts of Hereford are disgraceful at the moment and will deter people from returning. Hotspots - Union Walk and Drybridge underpass!!
Local councils do not have the finances to take on these extra services unless more finance is released to make it possible
Make dog fouling charges huge £500 per poo. Ask the community to cut the local grass; we would happily do so close to our house.
No - they should be given the money to deliver these by HC from savings made through the suggestions in my previous comment. Otherwise this is just double taxation HC will put up its council tax and parishes will do so as well.
No - why should we pay for services twice!

Comments
No additional parish council tax. In Ledbury this has been extremely high in increases over the last 3 years. The reason given, less money received from county budget. I would not mind at 1% increase in line/above inflation. Enough is enough.
No I don't. I pay enough now. Start charging them that pay nothing. 10 flats by me pay nothing, not even one off them.
No I don't. I pay enough now. Start charging them that pay nothing. 10 flats by me pay nothing, not even one off them.
no more than many town and parish councils already do
No- some of these thing should be co ordinated, but on a voluntary basis.
No they shouldn't charge more and should manage their budget more efficiently
No, that would be paying twice effectively for the same services. We are already paying enough, to get nothing out of it.
No, that's just another way of putting council tax up.
No. This is a sparsely populated parish with limited resources. It should not have to pay, for example, for highways which have substantial use by heavy traffic (e.g. quarry, farm, commercial lorries) as it is transacted by the A4110 and fringed by the B4362.
No. this is purely passing the buck and is the responsibility of county council.
Not capable of running bus services
Not really, because the Council is being forced to abandon their responsibilities.
Odd question. There is no space to indicate you don't want further taxation at county or local level. My earnings have steadily declined over the years to the point I earn less now than I did 30 years ago. I have to pay more to take care of myself. There is no NHS (National Health Service) dentistry where I live, prescription charges are high, I have to spend more support on my children's education because of cuts and give more to people in need through charitable donations, because the state can't or won't support people in need. I pay more and more to local/county government each year for fewer and fewer, poorer quality services. This points to government cuts and inefficient local management as the problem.
Only applicable in largely populated councils. Small parish councils that are predominantly elderly could not do this
Parish council shouldn't charge extra, all these are local government's responsibilities. Get on with that, deliver the services!
Parish Councillors are volunteers. Most already work hard, so no organisation of these tasks cannot be added to their work load. It is much better and cost-effective to organise these tasks centrally
Parish Councils are not qualified to manage additional activities. They can barely manage the ones they do already.
Parish councils generally do not have the resources, staffing or economies of scale to do these things efficiently. We do some of them (e.g. organising and underwriting a minibus service) purely to replace things when they are cut and we face a crisis as a result.
Please Keep all existing libraries open.
Please remind me what we pay council tax for
Pressing Herefordshire Council to fulfil its responsibilities fully without question.
Provision of community based demand responsive transport schemes to replace bus subsidies.
rest should be delivered by the council (except 'Grass / hedge cutting' and 'Litter / dog fouling enforcement')
Roads in parts of Ledbury are shameful
Save money by allowing locals to be in charge of communal areas

Comments
Some of these tasks could be done as community service by petty offenders
There is not a 'NO' option! We cannot afford to pay more for services we already pay for unless we just pay-as-we-use for all services.
These should all be funded centrally to ensure fair distribution. If parishes wish to do more, that should be voluntary.
This is a simple attempt to push services away from Herefordshire Council as is an attempt to push the burden of the tax rise on to Parish Councils.
This sort of 'saving' is fraudulent - tax-payers pay the same or more - to another recipient!
Those items I have not ticked are the responsibility of the county council!
Try talking to the parishes rather than dumping your unwanted costs onto them using phoney stats from a biased survey
Very few people actively volunteer to provide these services, whatever response they give in a survey.
We already have volunteers to do all of these - and more - at Weobley.
We already pay more as taken on the assets
We pay for all of the above through council tax now

Appendix A-Q6

Q6a. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles. Other, please specify: There were 54 comments made

Already volunteer
Active Charity Trustee
Already do some gardening by Victoria Bridge
Arts and culture event management of free community events; free talking newspaper for visually impaired/blind people
Church
Cooking breakfast for low income and homeless people, looking after clubbers on Saturday nights
Donating my handmade craft items to charities
Driving for outings - old people
Generally being a responsible citizen/good neighbour
Heartstart
Helping families who need help to get their children to school. We are members of a volunteer group that tidies up & plants wild flowers at the top of Tump Lane in Much Birch & keeps footpath clear for the school children & their parents.
I am a town councillor
I am one of the volunteers who run Weobley library. I am treasurer of our local community magazine.

I volunteered at my local Children's Centre from 2011-14, when I had a baby. I worked as a breastfeeding peer supporter, a parent representative on the Advisory Board, and on the Wye Valley NHS Trust's Baby Friendly Initiative strategy group. I have stopped as my child is now in school. I have just joined the school's PTFA, and 'Transition Leominster', and am interested in joining the 'Grangers' too. I think there is a lot of 'volunteering' that we participate in that goes un-noticed, e.g. visiting elderly neighbours, childminding, helping in emergencies, providing emotional support, and participating in community events.. It's very hard to quantify.
Involvement in voluntary organisations - W.E.A. (Workers educational Association), UA3, etc
Junior Bulls, conservation volunteers
Local Council - NDP Steering - other national charity work
Member of the Parish Council
Parish council
Q5) I work more than full time and have a family. I work all the time, have few opportunities for leisure activity and the little spare time I have I spend with my family. I help out an elderly neighbour when I can and have helped out in schools in the past. I would like to help more but I have no spare time.
Riding for the Disabled, Youth Drama Group
School
School events
Sports coaching
Sports coaching
Stewarding in church
Town Councillor
Trustee for a carers' charity
Trustee of charity and also volunteer at HFC (Hereford Football Club)
Village fundraising for the community centre, church, elderly. I also run the library Friends group, and the amateur dramatic society
Village Hall Trustee
Volunteer and Trustee at Riding for Disabled, Volunteer Hereford Disability United & Director despite using wheelchair
Wildlife, footpaths
Work in community shop
Youth club
Interested in volunteering
All such services require public liability insurance and DRB (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks
Already working full time cannot do any more than I currently do
Charity work. Local information (church Magazine)
Currently help with fund raising for charities, running village hall; happy to help in a library or emergency road clearance work.
Helping the youth group
Helping with the community Lander and the 'spin off' breakfast club.
Homeless, addictions, mental health
I cannot volunteer more widely without a better public transport system (not community transport)
I don't live in an area where these things are needed. If I lived in a town I would consider them or I would volunteer for home-based, back office support.
I litter pick every day as people can or won't put litter in the bins. Try fining them for dropping litter - raise money that way
I volunteer on my neighbourhood plan steering group

I'm the Treasurer to the Village Hall and Community Centre
Information and advice, filling in forms which many older people find daunting.
It might be great the people are happy to do free work but if no one volunteers nothing gets sorted
parish councillor isn't on the list; I'm re-joining the evening
Providing skills improvement and class workshops
Provision of local food bank
Shifting the burden of responsibility to the citizenry does not absolve government of its responsibility for citizens' welfare
These are all council tax jobs
Volunteering is fine for people who have time, but for many people, including myself, opportunities are restricted because of work and family commitments. Also, of course, some people are too infirm to be able to volunteer.

Appendix A-Q7a

Q7a. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? Other, please specify: There were 104 comments made

Comments
Accelerate high speed broadband rollout - this is a huge imperative and everything else pales in comparison
Assign petty offenders to litter picking - community service could also include grass cutting, hedge trimming, clearing drains
Be pragmatic and finally build a city centre bypass; build new direct roads to connect Hereford to regional motorways in Ross on Wye and Worcester
Better broadband
Better internet access
Better public transport
Bold and visionary thinking on a strategic communications strategy to attract global interest in Herefordshire
Broadband!
Build another river crossing, reduce congestion as many people avoid it altogether
Build new housing in larger estates, not small garden grabs and field infills. Leominster in particular this applies to.

Comments

Build on Herefordshire's strengths, in order to install a pride of place in Herefordians as well as attract more people here. We could build up a capacity and reputation as being leaders in certain fields if we build on what the county offers, and assess what it could offer to future generations. I think its natural environment is an obvious asset, which should be protected and enhanced; otherwise Herefordshire's special qualities would be destroyed. We can forge our own development path - a sustainable one - that creates a more resilient, vibrant place & culture. This would attract people and businesses (sustainable ones!) in itself.

Build some houses please, big shortage, young people moving away.

Bypass in Leominster and Hereford required. Establish proposed STEM University. Better road links to rest of UK, including motorways. Improve train services to London and Birmingham. Fast broadband and better mobile coverage. Housing only if new businesses are coming into the county. Important to encourage a mix of businesses.

Clear litter from edge of roads, put up clear signs (many are very dirty or hidden behind hedges) and make the approaches to our county a lot smarter.

Continue expansion at Rotherwas/Skylon Enterprise Zone

Continue to support bus services

Council needs new people to bring new life to a dying county

Deliver high speed broadband is the main priority

Develop further education facilities

Do not know word "upskill"

Don't make everything town-centric. Allow rural development to flourish. Including development.

Enable social housing development

Encourage businesses to develop worthwhile apprenticeships & schools to develop the skills based education we need.

Encourage more skilled folk to settle in Herefordshire with new skills

Get staff back and keep local services open. Why close local services when you have not got money to spend.

Get superfast broadband connection throughout the county

Get the traffic flowing so that visitors and deliveries can drive into Hereford

Comments
Go out and sell it - workforce availability etc.
Help advertise Herefordshire businesses, including shops and tourist attractions.
Housing for rent
Housing should be linked to infrastructure. E.g. developing Hereford as an employment centre
Ignore it, or move county to south east England. Its geographical position means that agriculture and tourism should be its biggest industries. Location means that, beyond agricultural output, only producers of high value, near-nil-volume goods are likely to be attracted to Herefordshire. Grandiose plans for industry and infrastructure should be abandoned and small/shared/incubator business units developed.
Improve accessibility to public transport
Improve broadband - faster.
Improve broadband connectivity
Improve broadband in the county
Improve bus services to reduce congestion and help local economies
Improve city centre and access to city centre
improve environment more sustainable transport
Improve internet access and connections.
Improve passenger transport
Improve public transport access
Improve public transport network, attracts more spend in localities
Improve public transport so that potential employees can travel to and from work easily.
improve roads and get better broadband and mobile phone connections
Improve roads and public transport, increase wages and create affordable housing. Herefordshire is a very expensive area in which to live and work.
Improve sporting facilities
Improve the conditions of existing infrastructure.

Comments
Improve the public realm in our town centres and villages and maintain public services such as buses. Boost the idea of the county being high tech, green and cut down air and other pollution in Hereford.
Improve the road surfaces - there are huge potholes on many roads
Improve the road system by building roads that will have maximum not minimum impact. Despite Fastershire broadband is still very poor around the county
Improve transport hub facilities
Improve transport links, especially public transport
Improve, not cut bus services
Improved broadband is most important as it would allow more people to work from home or rural offices. Please do not build all over the superb landscape and heritage assets of Herefordshire.
Improvement of infrastructure should not be Hereford focussed as it currently is. Housing development appears to only serve to encourage more people to retire to the county.
Improving public transport (buses/rail/trams) and the timing links between all categories.
Improving public transport is key
Improving the road surfaces and filling potholes that need to be filled. Monitoring speeding traffic through villages
Increase spending & enforcement on litter collection and street cleansing.
Inducements for relocation
Insist government meets its responsibilities ... what is the council actually doing in this regard?
Lobby for better road links into and around Hereford
Lower business rates
Lower the rates. Fix the roads.
Make first impression of town's better, need to look attractive and not send visitors around the backstreets as in Ross before they can find their way to the town centre.
Make the river attractive to walkers, cyclists etc. Definitely get rid of litter.
More leisure facilities and visitor attractions needed in the county. Improve the leisure pool as it needs updating. We need to attract more visitors to spend in the county.

Comments
No more houses!!
Not sure
Pressure the utility companies for better supplies especially IT services. Do the rental charges for properties in town really need to be that high?
Promote business opportunity in Herefordshire as below.
Provide excellent industrial units for rent - energy efficient, good transport networks
Provide free workshops on setting up own business
Provide more and support current entertainment opportunities as outlined in the March 2007 report 'How to retain and attract 18 - 35 year olds to the county'
Provide park and ride as city centre car parking is now too expensive
Provide some sort of support in setting up new business, making it easy rather than difficult
Put more public sector jobs into villages.
rail / roads and public transport to key employment areas
Recognise Ross on Wye as the gateway to the county with the best road links, many industrial opportunities have been lost by focussing on Hereford city when the motorway network begins at Ross.
Reduce car parking charges. Herefordshire Council has done its best to destroy the city. Too much ill-judged 'development' for 'prestige'.
Reduce rates for shops in town. Encourage renewable energy.
Reduction in rates and parking = more business and people visiting the city
Reliable mobile phone and internet throughout the county.
Repair the roads properly (not bodge them up) and get proper fibre broadband to rural areas
Restore some funding to The Courtyard
Rising scale of Tax. i.e. 0% 1st year, 40% 2nd year, 75% 3rd year, 100% 4th year. Give the business time to grow.
Sort out the traffic and parking problems
Sort out traffic congestion

Comments
speed up fibre broadband installation
Stop trying to make bigger it only brings more cost to everything around and does not bring more money in. If it did we would not struggle.
Stop wasting public funds and start offering business incentives to come here.
Superfast broadband needs to be a priority across the whole county
Support business via planning for & building live/work units in local communities. Build flexible, clean, and small to medium industrial units that can be used in for lots of different businesses at reasonable rents.
The new university
The road system is appalling and off putting - as well as high car parking charges.
Transport
Transport, transport, transport, and parking. Traffic in Hereford is bad and parking very excessive. I work from home 3 miles from Hereford but now don't go into town unless I really have too. £5 to park on some rough gravel at Edgar Street is a rip off.
Try some real support for tourism, the biggest part of the county economy rather than your infatuation with small numbers of hi tech jobs
try to make the old town centre a little more appealing to businesses aka a clean-up
University/Higher education.
We need good roads and 1st class broadband to attract businesses and keep young people and those with young families in the county
What does upskill workers mean?
Whatever is done needs to be clearly communicated to residents so we all understand what the councils plans are

Appendix A-Q8

Q8. Is there any other capital investment you think the council should make?

There were 111 comments made

Comments
A bypass. Tidy up grotty footpaths. Jet washes high town and Eign gate and the subways.

Comments
A city centre bypass. Build new direct roads to connect Hereford to regional motorways in Ross on Wye and Worcester.
A joined up network of tourist information hubs
A new Library, essential for a beneficial knowledge climate: see Worcester
A proper cycle path scheme instead of pretending to promote cycling, build a Hereford ring road, promote free parking schemes in the market towns
Achieve the above projects and many problems will be solved.
Additional support for families with young children through Home Start etc.
Advice Services - Citizens Advice/Partnership
Become more involved with improving Hereford library (Broad Street). A centre to improve the lives of those in the community.
Better public transport in Hereford - you don't need more roads, just to discourage (by providing a good alternative) the plethora of local cross-city trips that clog the place up, e.g. the school run. Better broadband connectivity helps, too. And finding ways to keep high-value office jobs in the city centre, not shifting them all to Rotherwas will pay massive dividends in city centre regeneration, which begins a virtuous circle of growth and recovery. Sending jobs to Rotherwas so the city becomes an employment wasteland, apart from retail is extremely short sighted. Hereford is your main and only real prospect of securing jobs growth. Everywhere else the costs of making them appealing are simply not worth it.
Better road surfaces
Better roads
Boost existing businesses by ensuring and advertising bus routes to them, e.g. provide bus services from Hereford city centre and Ross to Ross Labels and various tourist attractions within Herefordshire. The Wye Valley is a hotspot for tourism, but more people from within Herefordshire could day trip there with better advertising and transport services. This would encourage people to spend money locally on buses and small local businesses rather than hopping on a train to Barry Island (which is easier than getting to the Wye Valley from Hereford city) and spending their money where we won't benefit.
Build a by-pass round Hereford. Upgrade all A roads Improve bus services. Support village infrastructure - e.g. village hub buildings such as village halls
Build a new library / museum.
Build at least one bridge across the wye in Hereford near the centre - not a by-pass. Traffic wishes to get in and out of Hereford. Park and Ride. Improved cycle lanes and cycle routes - and actually carry these projects through. The St Owen street contraflow has been cancelled at least twice already - will it be 3rd time lucky?
Build council houses. That's it. Build houses for people to live in.
By pass around Ross from Walford to Hildersly!!
By-pass and new river crossing on the west of the city
Bypass in Leominster and Hereford required. Establish proposed STEM University. Better road links to rest of UK, including motorways. Improve train services to London and Birmingham. Fast broadband and better mobile coverage. Vital to invest in tourism. Ideal industry as it will both promote the best assets and retains the values and ethos of the county. Establish a 'Golden Valley' National Park or AONB (Areas of Outstanding natural Beauty) and build appropriate facilities (cycling, footpaths etc.) to make it accessible and enjoyable to visitors.
Children services as it saves money in the long run
Complete Ledbury by-pass, to include access to strategic housing site, North of the Viaduct, from the A438 Hereford Rd, underneath the Viaduct.
Create a by pass for Hereford

Comments
Create a sports park which is state-of-the-art - encouraging a diverse range of activities and sports for all abilities.
Creation of improved public transport facilities in Hereford and market towns.
Cycle paths and bus improvements to help people to travel
deliver high speed broadband is the main priority
Develop further education facilities
Ensure that social care is appropriately funded particularly in rural areas
Ensure that the council considers the artistic, creative and cultural needs of the people both young and old.
Fund and support H.V.O.S.S. (Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service) because if you are needing more volunteers to support the services you are responsible for you will need their experience in co-coordinating efforts to maximum efficiency.
Get moving on the western relief road
Get rid of it's most inefficient buildings and build / buy / refurbish buildings so that it owns and occupies an estate of efficient buildings that cost far less to run, as per the new HARC (Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre)
Hereford bypass
Herefordshire pays some of the lowest wages in the UK, yet it is a very expensive county to live in. A high percentage of workers only earn minimum wage or the National Living Wage. Perhaps the council could spend some money to educate employers to pay better wages. After all, if you pay peanuts - you get monkeys!
How about supporting public transport and not trashing it? Increased investment in sports and fitness - I have never seen so many fat 20-somethings as there are in this county: a long-term cost to the NHS. A water sports centre (sailing/rowing etc.) on the old gravel pits at Marden is a no-brainer. Promotion of cycling is also a no-brainer - a 'tour de Herefordshire'? Our country roads are perfect.
Ignore it, or move county to south east England. Its geographical position means that agriculture and tourism should be its biggest industries. Location means that, beyond agricultural output, only producers of high value, near-nil-volume goods are likely to be attracted to Herefordshire. Grandiose plans for industry and infrastructure should be abandoned and small/shared/incubator business units developed.
Improve Broadband connectivity
Improve city centre and access to city centre
Improve provision of cycle paths-perhaps by encouraging farmers to provide space beside roads and giving them favourable publicity when they do so.
Improve public transport
Improve roads
Improve roads and infrastructure
Improve the roads that we already have. Stop building roads over our beautiful countryside. Work out sustainable transport measures instead. Turn the city into a no car zone and make it a cycling mecca. Look at the visionary tram idea.
Improve tourist infrastructure
Improve traffic congestion
Improve transport infrastructure
Improve transport infrastructure for public transport.

Comments
Improve/provide lighting and cameras on footpaths and cycle lanes.
Improved access/road improvements specifically aimed at rural tourism improvements. E.g. cycle/footpath across Backney bridge that connects rural villages to Ross-on-Wye.
Improved Bus/Rail facilities, bus priority schemes, not just cycle paths!
Increase digital resources - libraries, public space, etc. Use increased analytics to deliver core services more effectively. Increased promotion of how people can use services most effectively.
Increase the amount spent on the county's roads - this will help reduce the spend on remedial works
Intensive support and assessment for children who are failing in education and are excluded from school. This group of children are very expensive, frequently go onto commit crimes and are easily led into taking drugs etc. This could be avoided if their needs were properly assessed whilst in school and if necessary treatment provided. Also if their families were supported during this time, their outcomes are much improved, enhancing the lives of each member of the family, whilst reducing the cost to the tax payer. Resources to fund a team of people to do this work would be at a minimal cost and save money in education, law enforcement, health (better mental health, fewer attendances at A and E (Accidents and Emergency) etc.)
Invest in their local small businesses and help them grow.
Invest in training to up skill council employees and then cut down expensive interim consultants who eats public money.
Invest to save in projects that deliver energy savings and income from renewables - especially council buildings and industrial estate properties
Keep the libraries open, they are a huge source of information and books that would be incredibly difficult to get otherwise! It is vital! Thanks.
Library service
Look to development of its property assets as opposed to selling them for others to develop, so that the council sees the full return or is able to control what is developed based on the county needs.
Lower rates for local shops and garages so that they can stay open and support people who work from home.
Make all new housing developments install Gerry waste water & sewage systems that are cheaper than conventional systems, look attractive and clean more effectively.
Make first impression of town's better, need to look attractive and not send visitors around the backstreets as in Ross before they can find their way to the town centre.
Mental health services. Careers advice/support in school and for adults
More capital investments to create long term savings (if the money stacks up correctly) such as placing solar or other technologies on/in buildings. Or stop using buildings where it would cost too much to retrofit these and work out if getting rid of these buildings and building something new which will save in the future would bring longer term savings. I can't see how selling off assets for other businesses to make profit out of them by converting them is going to benefit the council in the long term.
Need to attract quality employers not just in Hereford itself. Barriers are available buildings and the labour force is not skilled for the 21st century.
New bus station
New transport hubs fit for the 21st century or in Hereford's case even the 20th century!
Next phase of link road?
No. They have more than enough on which most of the time they cannot handle
Not given the current financial climate
Offer more leisure facilities for the County, new cycle track

Comments
Park and ride
Please ensure that the current plans are carried out. Housing is expensive, roads are atrociously maintained. Some council buildings are unfit for purpose - lack of appropriate toilet facilities Tec.
Provide subsidised flats to attract teachers, police, and nurses. Give them priority over non-workers. Build more 1 bedroom flats in 3 storey buildings for young and elderly. Build 2 and 3 bedroom terrace houses (more efficient use of land). Good to build on brown field sites.
Provision of county-wide community transport mini-buses, together with computer facilities to enable sharing of assets/drivers.
Quasi fixed capital investment in human resources to increase skill base.
Repair roads properly and stop wasting money of pointless short term pot hole filling that last no more than weeks and hold infrastructure providers (notably Open reach) to account for their failure to deliver reliable fibre broadband to rural areas
Repairing roads.
Ring road and another bridge over the river to ease traffic traveling into and through town. Stop artic lorry's needing to drive through the centre of Hereford
Ring road needs finishing! Car parking in Hereford needs extending and Kilpeck station would make a good park & ride or parkway. 1) Sustain key local services 2) Create jobs and get local people into work 3) Attract and secure inward investment 4) Improve connectivity through road improvements - ring road needs finishing. Provide better broadband connectivity - not all of us have computers. Enable new housing development - where?
Road and transport improvements to keep the city moving.
Roads, especially ring road to the east
Roads.
Rural cycle paths. I live along the A4110 and you would be mad to cycle along it (though people do), given the heavy lorries and farm machinery that uses the road. There's no pavement either. A cycle path into Leominster from Mortimers Cross would be marvellous - I'd use it for shopping and recreation, as would my husband and children.
Schools need investment - many of them are very shabby. It sets a bad example to our aspirational youngsters.
Small projects that create multiple values for people and the environment (along the principles mentioned in Q.3) decided by a process of shared problem-solving and co-design (elaborated on in Q.9)
Sort out the traffic problems in the city centre
Specific to Ledbury - Connect road underneath viaduct for strategic housing. Improve broadband connectivity
Spend less/much less on wasteful items e.g. most of what is currently being done now and in the past
Stop trying to make bigger it only brings more cost to everything around and does not bring more money in. If it did we would not struggle.
Support for home-workers using the improved broadband connection to make effective use of online workforce and reduce employment related transport difficulties.
Supporting long term unemployed people to get jobs. This would also have the benefit of reducing the financial support the council has to provide to them e.g. Housing benefits etc.
Sustainable transport. investing in tourism focusing on the river Wye
Target attractiveness of market towns for inward investment. Really need a market towns project. Infrastructure investment should consider surgeries etc. in areas of high housing growth

Comments
Target one or two high tech industries that could set-up significant businesses in the area without concern for our relative isolation.
The area is known for a lot of negative things, such as the transport being poor, the roads full of potholes, the buses not running on time, the council has a lot of things that could be promoted and used to its advantage: the blind college produces a lot of talented students, why not try to develop these skills further, promote that as bigger thing create a unique skill set that shows the council is disability aware and promoting it. Which would help to develop staff here and residents to increase knowledge would benefit all the area could be promoted by using its quietness to bring in larger office based business from places like London to have their office here. Need to increase the internet speed but push the business advantage of working here and bringing in new skill to the area is the first to develop a big business here. Bring in someone like Thorne EMI again bring in JCB type business frame to develop a trade framework, investment in the roads and transport links could be vital. Repair them quickly, look at areas such as Sweden where they develop road repair systems which repair stretches by digging up whole patches and then relaying it behind so no patch work roads. Be the first in country to do this. Increase the councils presence with a trade, promote it so brings in more business as there is nothing really that stands out business wise as Bulmer's has been sold off the other companies that used to be a icon of. Herefordshire no longer stand out even the Hereford cattle is no longer unique and stand out for our area. We need to stand out stand up and be proud shout about how good we are as a county as we can be better than the low position we have dropped to in amazing places in the UK.
The bypass is a priority.
The Hereford Enterprise Zone is not as successful as an enterprise zone should be because Hereford is remote, nowhere near the motorway network so not attractive. Time is a big factor. It takes too long to get to Hereford from anywhere. Time is money. New housing is only selling very slowly, so plans to build 1000s more seem misplaced. Much better to invest in tourism, culture and agricultural/horticultural/food/drink excellence to put Herefordshire on the map.
There needs to be some provision for youth, this could reduce damage caused in parks etc.
Trade, Tourism and International Awareness promotion to elevate Herefordshire's visibility in Europe, the United States and other global regions
Traffic calming
Transport Interchange at the Railway Station.
Transport projects such as providing bus real time info, smart ticketing, and transport interchange fit for purpose.
What is Herefordshire's unique selling proposition? Why would businesses want to come any further west than Worcester, Gloucester or Bristol.
Whatever is done needs to be clearly communicated to residents so we all understand what the councils plans are
Widen Belmont road or do something to reduce the traffic, similarly the Newtown road stretch at the end of Edgar street.
Work with the MP and central government. Go approve funding for all things.
Yes, as above. The new university.
You've identified the important areas but Hereford needs a bypass NOW

Appendix A-Q9

Q9. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions how we could deliver services in a different way? There were 119 comments made.

Comments
A clear vision of what Herefordshire Council can actually do - in numbers, not vague aspirational vocabulary - would make an enormous difference.
Access to centralised enquiry team via live video pods in supermarkets/petrol stations/pubs (in rural areas) or by web portal. Production of apps to assist in reporting potholes, blocked gullies etc. via android / apple phones.
As I noted above - scrap BBLP and bring in house. Stop moving offices around the city - don't spend money on a building for offices and then move in a few years It is like deckchairs on the titanic
As stated before, another local government restructure to re-join Worcestershire or link up with Shropshire / Gloucestershire. The traditional 'county' services like social services can be delivered from that regional organisation and parishes do the more local services. But that doesn't mean parishes raising their council tax precept, they should simply get a cut of the massive savings to be made by economies of scale from joining up, so the whole thing is cost neutral and council tax payers see their money go further.
As well as the possible tiring of service buy-in and voluntary charitable giving on the council tax bill, you could consider the idea of rationalizing your benefits/fraud service and switching to a countywide universal living payment. Most research into universal payment schemes show them to be progressive and beneficial with lower running costs. You could merge all your services into one building in each town, so that a library would also contain the TI, CAB, careers advice and other walk-in support services. In Leominster, for instance, you could move the fire station onto the enterprise area and sell off the riverside site. Or sell off (or stop renting) the library, TI and CAB buildings, relocate the fire station and use the riverside site to build this larger central council facility which could include gallery and presentation space, but only if it might give a net capital gain. You could use this investment to build something of real national/international architectural merit and interest to encourage businesses and tourists as well as increase patronage.
Be more efficient - improve council employee's efficiency
Being more creative and valuing staff.
Better access to online services and info via email/web/social media
Better support for carers and young carers
Bring back in house external work such as Highways and Hoople, why pay someone else to earn a profit from the council? Of course we all know the consultation will be ignored as last year with cutting of bus services.
Build flats or house or garages on spare ground in Vicarage St, to stop parking and dumping scrap car. Up to 7 at a time. We who live there have had to get moved. Q1) Paid for my bus pass, paying taxes for 48 years at work
Build flats or house or garages on spare ground in Vicarage St, to stop parking and dumping scrap car. Up to 7 at a time. We who live there have had to get moved. Q1) Paid for my bus pass, paying taxes for 48 years at work
Build the bypass at Hereford and E-W bypass at Leominster.
Build your own care homes for the elderly so that you don't have to pay the huge fees charged by profit making private enterprise care homes.
Bulk buying of everything with other local authorities. Monday - Friday working and Wednesday - Sunday working with Monday/Tuesday off so less Lorries less cost. When recycling contract due do the above so less capital and less cost for company. Cut rights of way budget. Look at in house efficiency and ways to be more effective.

Comments
Challenge the idea that Herefordshire can only survive if it builds a new large-scale business economy. The location is against that, while money is being wasted trying to promote it. Stop wasting money and focus on natural assets.
Communication needs to be better - most people don't know how decisions are made of that we could in fact have a voice - it just seems that decisions are made from top down. Give your people a voice and make it more accessible for them to do so!
Contact with public officers to reduce wasting time trying to source correct department.
Continue to roll out energy saving initiatives and renewable energy options and initiatives around the County.
Customer contact and advice, emergency support and others could benefit, cost wise, from sharing services with other county councils.
Cut Adult care. Sorry but it takes far too much of the budget and frankly we have had it good we baby boomers. It's time to give the youngsters a chance. As for devolving services to parishes What a joke. The councillors are volunteers and the clerks are part time. We have neither the time or expertise to take on these sort of projects. Didn't we get rid of District Councils who did these jobs?
Delegate as much local services to Parish and Town Councils with the funding to deliver it. Taken on as many central government roles as possible that relate to Herefordshire if the funding is available to help deliver them. Don't rely on volunteers delivering services but encourage and support them as much as possible where they do want to take on services.
Delivering services using volunteers is NOT a cost free exercise, especially if delivering services in people's homes. To protect vulnerable children and adults and to deliver a quality service that meets legal requirements and follows good practice guidelines, means forward planning, understanding what is to be delivered and employing a robust volunteer coordinator. Volunteers need to be recruited, trained, and supervised regularly. There needs to be a clear system off discipline and grievance management to support good volunteers and weed out unsuitable ones.
Demand businesses in the new market development and the enterprise zone to pay business rates.
Distribute some funds to Parish Councils to establish Community projects to maintain rural environment and facilities.
Efficient managerial staff - good training for your staff - stops relying on internet for everything as it is too time consuming and causes problems for people which could be solved with the correct face to face contact.
Either commission services on a needs basis, or commission on an economy of scale basis in partnership with Shropshire. Trying to commission on an economy of scale basis for Herefordshire alone does not make good business due to the population size.
Ensuring close continuity between county health & social services so that funding is used as effectively as possible. Consider libraries as an educational & community asset, often the only such asset in small communities, therefore justifying adequate funding.
Explore more business type opportunities. I think much has already been achieved and budget cuts have already been really difficult. Duplication has been reduced, it already seems like the bare minimum / statutory function is delivered.
Filling potholes when first seen buy Balfour Beaty.
Focus on finishing tasks that are started before starting new ones and failing to complete any well.
Funding market town improvements will encourage tourism.
Genuinely work in partnership with parish councils instead of the disdain you have exhibited for years.
Have a more proactive communication with residents. The Cabinet system is extremely undemocratic.

Comments
<p>Have greater consultations with the Market Towns, to demonstrate fairness and equality, services are too City centric. Parish Council's should receive a percentage of Council Tax collected, i.e. 20%, for the local delivery of services that are being devolved by the County to satisfy the short term savings, e.g. grass cutting, toilets, libraries/local services, litter collection, etc. The Parish Councils could probably do it more efficiently and cheaper, but need the funding, we cannot keep raising the precept's, that's double taxation. If you do it for CIL, it can be done for Council Tax.</p>
<p>Having today visiting Ross on Wye customer council services today I was so impressed by the excellent service I received, in every way. I can only say, Ross office should go to the top of the class.</p>
<p>Herefordshire Council has over the last few years completely abdicated its responsibilities to maintaining the health and well being of its citizenry by buying into a system of austerity promulgated by a right wing government that favours the 'haves' over the 'have nots'. It is shameful that the council has not taken any measures to ensure that the vulnerable and the dispossessed are not increasingly side-lined in the face of such greed and, in fact, has assisted in this subjection of its population.</p>
<p>Herefordshire is a beautiful place to live but not a place to grow old in. The council has no money or ideas to improve services, the hospital is in special measures and the infrastructure is at risk of collapse.</p>
<p>I am recently arrived into Herefordshire and will consider ways to improve service delivery during the coming months.</p>

Comments
<p>I care about Herefordshire, and don't want to see services cut to the bone. Services could in fact be delivered in radically different ways, if we could only dare to think differently... (And I hope this message gets to senior managers, executives, and council members). When there are cutbacks, the first casualties are our ability to be creative, innovate, and freely associate ideas - yet these are the very things we need in order to be resilient to change. (And I mean the resilience of the county, and of the Council itself.) Often, we do things 'the way they have always been done', and find it hard to readjust what we do to be fit for purpose, because we can no longer see the woods for the trees. This is exactly when we need a reality check. Here are a few suggestions: - Designing projects and delivering services together. Delivery-level staff across diverse departments can achieve a lot when given the opportunity to put their heads together often, collectively share problems, and come up with ideas that address more than one issue. Not only does this reduce the instances of working at cross-purposes, or duplicating work, but it also generates increased efficiency in that multiple benefits are reaped - i.e. 'win-win' situations. (e.g. a project based on flood-defence issues could also create habitats contributing to ecological resilience, increase access to the outdoors, generate energy, create opportunities for recreation, tourism, etc., etc...) Co-design can be expanded on to include partner organisations. - Taking a long-term approach, and addressing the 'root causes' of problems. It takes guts to take a proactive approach in reactive times, but it is entirely necessary for our efforts to be sustainable. It represents huge savings in the long term, if not the short (e.g. addressing children's health and wellbeing now means healthier adults in the future; creating a true 'pride of place' reduces littering & antisocial behaviour...) - though some interventions would possibly produce short-term benefits too. - Involving people, the Council could be reaping much added value from involving citizens in decision-making, and in contributing to its aims. If people are engaged properly, then they will not feel coerced, but empowered to participate in improving their own communities. This has to be done carefully (as mentioned before), which communicating clearly - in terms that we all understand, through media we access easily (including digital engagement, e.g. twitter opinion polls - but not abandoning other means, e.g. having paper forms at the library, along with a friendly member of staff!), and most importantly in language that emphasises shared ownership and responsibility, and dissolves the boundary between 'authority' and 'service user'. Overwhelmingly, increasing transparency and openness generates goodwill and trust. More events could be held to engage the public with decisions about the things that matter most to them, and involve them in delivery where appropriate (e.g. Sydonia Park, Leominster - first a community meeting was held to find out what people wanted for their local park, then a volunteering day was held to carry out some of the work - having the added benefit of bringing the community together, building social coherence). Also, the Council could be publishing more Open Data, enabling businesses, education establishments, community-builders and interested citizens to engage with the issues we grapple with as a county, and offer solutions. Additional ideas:- Sharing resources with other public services where it makes sense to do so (this is probably already being done) - Offering contracts to local businesses, using local supply chains wherever possible. Encouraging a circular economy. - Income-generating activities, and maximising use of assets, as mentioned before.</p>
<p>I think the Public Realm budget is seen as an easy option for cuts; Herefordshire roads are in dire need of investment and it is extremely short sighted of the Council to neglect investment now for short term budgetary gain.</p>
<p>I think we need to see more community involvement but not have all volunteers who do not cost anything but still have a "hike" in our council tax to keep the middle management in posts.</p>
<p>Implement a can do policy to replace the current you must not policy - move on, make it happen instead of finding reasons not to.</p>
<p>Important to protect services like CAB, social care</p>
<p>Improve back office functions and processes to reduce waste. Re-tender expensive contracts. Merge with neighbouring authorities. Improve Joint working with partnerships. Put social services out to tender.</p>
<p>Improve efficiency within the council. Reduce internal waste within the council</p>
<p>Improve internal communication- council online presence to stimulate innovation.</p>

Comments
Improve key local services. No further cuts in public transport.
In the 14 years I have lived in the county I have seen so much money wasted. Just stop all the foolish spending. Amalgamate with Worcester or Shrewsbury (yes!!) and save a fortune in duplicated administration and services. Abandon corrupt cabinet system.
Invest in turning local assets into Social enterprises and look to see how council smallholdings could become the hub of local community enterprises etc.
It gets frustrating that you cut so many services but raise the council tax!! I don't care about adult social care!!
It is outrageous that the council has overspent and is coming cap in hand to ask us for more money. Who is in charge of the budget? Where are the priorities? There is still no Hereford Library! Why? Who thought it would be better to have some arty crap in the new shopping centre? Why do you keep building roads that don't go anywhere? Look at Hereford's local needs and respond in a sensible manner. I despair at the level of waste and the pie-in-the-sky schemes. What a waste!
It is very important to take into consideration safeguarding of vulnerable people - all volunteers should be vetted to ensure safety and no abuse - they should also receive adequate training for the roles they wish to volunteer for. Many organisations help in Herefordshire to protect the vulnerable - it is important that Herefordshire Council appreciate the work they do with the meagre funding they get - so should spend wisely on continuing to help these charities to continue in operation.
It is vital in this widespread rural County to keep access to Council services in the Market Towns, especially important in ageing communities. It's likely there will be cuts to transport and people will not be able to travel as easily so there will be an increased risk of isolation. Not everyone has the skills/knowledge/capability to go digital. Not everyone can afford to go digital. Not everyone is able to access free online services. Those living in more isolated areas are likely to have problems with network/phone signals. For those who are able to go digital - have the systems and network speeds to support this. Have robust online application forms etc. Have automated phone systems.
Keep bus services open and add later buses so people can get evening jobs if they don't have access to a car.
Keep Libraries and council offices open in Ross and Leominster market towns
Less bureaucracy means more time for staff to deliver services.
Less job-sharing - it is not efficient to have several people doing parts of a job - customers often have to wait till their contact is in before making any progress with a query.
Look at the systems used and ask why we are using so many systems to store people's details on when one will suffice. Why not use the information given to the various officers to actually look at services needed develop these to meet needs. If more people require the social service than need grass cutting why not look at putting more money in to that then looking at bring in teams from colleges such as Holme lacy to cut the grass and give a qualification for doing it. Use groups that would benefit from doing things as well as the county would. Look at the system Ross town council employed to recycle in previous years to get metal items, then they could collect more items for recycling would bring in skills to the charity users as it was people with additional needs who collected items helps with day groups and interaction skills for users. There are lots of things that could be done if people actually looked at the way they share information and asked for help. Use groups in the community as friends and partners not enemies, promote things that benefit the community not fight them speak to people not just other Cllrs and managers get out and about be more approachable. I work with in the council and this council is near impossible to speak to anyone to deliver any ideas to they are all dismissed and blown out of water for pointless groups of meetings that do nothing but waste time and money. The council needs to re-embrace the resident's views and be approachable to new ideas but also old ones. Look at the comments shared by residents not highly paid workers who don't live in the county and barely work from here either speaks to members of staff on front line in person not just by questionnaires.
Look to amalgamate services with Worcestershire.

Comments
Maintenance of roads in the county is clearly a low priority and significantly underfunded with oversight failure. These matters need addressing urgently before minor roads revert to cart tracks.
Make better use of the Children's Centre building, give access to providers to hire rooms in the evenings and weekends.
Make decisions about supporting local charities that deliver services to the vulnerable and needy in a more timely way. Currently it is impossible to plan services more than a few months ahead.
Maximize cost effectiveness of service delivery, ensuring contractors deliver what is required and tightening contracts
More choice
More cost effectively!
More customer facing staff.
More on line services and self help plus a reduction in management
One large state of the art County Library (out of town -Hereford e.g. Rotherwas) with excellent internet connections, skilled qualified Librarians, reading room for reference/Local History study. Plus a book/information delivery/collection (as in Amazon) throughout the county, delivered either by post/courier or drop in to local store, shop, garage, charity shop etc. with delivery van to take out and return. This would save the cost of expensive libraries at Leominster/Ross/Ledbury etc. while still providing books and information for those who need them and provide a good Professional information service to business user. Resurrect a peripatetic Professional children's Librarian to visit schools and advise on children's reading - expensive but still cheaper and more effective than multi-centre static libraries. Sorry, I did not fill in the Library Questionnaire but I missed the date as I was not aware of it.
Outsource/put out for tender council work/projects to enable more competitive pricing and control on spending.
Performance management of 'poor' staff within the council to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
Please save our library. We have a great team of volunteers who staff the community library but understand we may be closed to save money. This would be a huge loss to the community.
Pleased with service that BBLP provide
Positively encourage and offer contracts to non profit making social enterprises who have the interests of the community at their heart and minimise the use of public and private companies who are driven by profit and the bonuses of Directors and have no interest in the needs of the community
Providing services jointly with neighbouring authorities. The only thing that prevents this sort of thing happening is self-interest of senior managers and politicians.
Pushing services down to parish council budgets is hugely unfair. You need to control your costs and not simply move them to other places just because they do not have the budget constraints that you have. Cut your own unnecessary costs, including the ridiculous administration burden of the council.
Radical redesign of rural transport subsidies, to encourage community transport schemes. Protection of library and cultural services and closer integration with education services, at all (primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
Reduce costs by bringing services back in house, such as Hoople and Balfour Beatty, why pay their profit margin?
Reduce money spent on wasteful projects such as creating tree lined boulevards in South Wye and paying for interim staff.
Reduce the number of parish councils (merge smaller ones with neighbouring parishes), thus enabling them to better support Herefordshire Council
Reduce the senior management headcount

Comments
Reinvest in council services rather than lining the pockets of private companies. Support charities and organisations working with young homeless adults - they are our future and should be given as much help as possible at the start of their lives - without a secure housing base we are nothing and can become nothing. Without support they end up costing society more in the long term.
Repairs to the infrastructure please can they be done at night. Hereford was grid locked during August. Better IT services for the public in libraries. I'm helping when/if Hereford re-opens it will be much faster. More displays in council buildings regarding the various aspects the council covers and when they are being promoted.
Retain the core expertise in-house who know the county and how it functions, and review services fully that are being delivered against robust value for money criteria, to ensure that informed decisions are made based on real costs of delivering the service and the community impact.
Return to using Amey, not Balfour Beatty
Run the council as a business
Seamless services. Public services that talk to each other and work together to provide seamless services for the public needing/using them. Systems that are compatible and do the job properly.
See attached <letter attached is included in the appendix A-Q9a>
See no 8 please
Send district nurses and other health care workers to elderly at home more; allow visits to be longer. Give students career advice at age 14 or 15 so they can consider options while there is still a chance to get required courses in school. Make sure all in county speak, read & write English. Translators are an unnecessary expense. Anyone using them should be charged full price.
Share services with neighbouring authorities. More volunteers in more libraries. Insist that government recognises that Herefordshire has particular challenges (sparse population, wide range of small businesses below the rates threshold, few large businesses) and so needs appropriate funding to make up the shortfall that is inevitable if the county is to rely on business rates alone to make up the shortfall from a reducing government contribution.
Sort out the school buses, public buses are dangerous and currently children are standing up on busy routes which is UNSAFE and is leaving some parents worried about their children's safety.
Stop advertising free activities (e.g. visiting the Black & White House or nature trail walks) and start stimulating the local economy by advertising local activities that need to be paid for. Tourist information should inform people of where best to spend their money across Herefordshire, not how best to save it.
Stop letting contracts to the private sector. Properly managed the Council could deliver services for less cost. The profits currently made by the private sector could be used to deliver more services avoiding such severe cuts.
Stop spending on useless projects. Hire some new people with new, better ideas ... too much of the same old stuff and Herefordshire is going nowhere.
Stop the active village grant, no one wants it, its a low take up and costs loads
Support development of professional arts and crafts in Herefordshire Support further education to provide skilled workforce.
Take back control of the 'contracted out' services, and review them as council run activities. Better accountability and control of spending will follow.
The capital projects list makes a depressing litany of projects focused on Hereford city and on Council Officers obsessions. It, with the exception of schools, fails to reflect tax-payers aspirations. There should be no optional capital spending until finances are stable and sustainable - boring and challenging for officers but what residents would wish.
The fact that Hereford has no proper library is appalling

Comments
The highway bridges and roads are declining in condition rapidly due to under investment, they need further maintenance investment to keep them open
The main thing is to lobby central government to stop the austerity budget which is having such a negative impact on our rural economy
The Parish Council considers that Herefordshire Council should be able to increase Council Tax above 2% to counteract cuts in central government funding. However, the requirement to hold a referendum to do this makes this option unavailable in practice, as it is unlikely that a majority of taxpayers would vote in favour for increased taxes, and the cost of such a referendum would therefore be a waste of scarce resources. Central government should be told that these rules are a restriction on the rights of elected councillors to take local decisions on local matters, and a cynical attempt to avoid responsibility for the catastrophic impacts of central government funding cuts. Central government would not seek a referendum on increasing taxes for exactly the same reasons, so why should they impose this requirement on local government?
There is too much expenditure on road building and maintenance rather than on public realm and basic services. If you compare Hereford, which has aspirations to be a university city, with other medium sized cities it looks very car dominated, dirt and threadbare.
Think ahead and not having to be in a 'catch-up' situation all the time i.e. be proactive and not reactive. If this means employing new forward thinking people so be it.
Thinking still seems to be disjointed and there is no focus on maintaining what makes the county so unique. It seems that the Council is actually hell-bent on destroying the character of the county rather than supporting it. In my mind, this hardly qualifies as a consultation - there is no substance to the questions that properly reflects the complex issues that need to be balanced to achieve the necessary savings.
This survey does not let respondents give a view on the full list of proposals for cutting the budget 2017-2020
Try and share with neighbouring authorities. Do not expect parishes to be able to fill the gaps; they are not skilled enough at present and it is very hard to go from a standing start to do new services responsibly.
Undertake meaningful consultation- listen to feedback received.
Use capital funding for planned highway maintenance, and street lighting, thereby reducing pressure on revenue budget. Replacing broken pedestrian and equestrian bridges, and funding small improvements to the rights of way network.
Use online as much as possible and scale back in person and phone services so that those who can use online find it much more attractive rather than queueing or hanging on the phone. Those unable to use the web will then be an ever decreasing minority needing to use expensive in-person or phone services and they can be scaled back then dropped.
Value the existing voluntary organisation that you already support and please don't reduce their funding without serious discussions as to the longer term impact of such decisions. Reducing funding for one will possibly increase pressure on another.
We don't use communal areas, we don't use leisure services, public transport, nurseries, any type of social care etc. I seriously think that the government in general, not just councils, should only make people pay taxes for the services they use. Means test things like bus passes, OAP rates for services etc., television licences, winter fuel allowances. Stop giving high earners free nursery care etc. If we stopped handing out 'freebies' to the people who can easily afford to pay instead, I'm sure everyone, especially the needy would benefit.
What funds does the council get from the EU? If any, we don't know yet how this might/will change.
Work as one team for the good of the people of Herefordshire. If you want to be the best and have a tidy county you must work with all to maintain roads, litter picking, cut hedging, clean road signs, and maintain bins and so on and so on.

Comments
<p>Yes - get rid of Balfour Beatty & its pathetic random pothole patching. Get rid of Balfour Beatty blokes wandering aimlessly with leaf blowers (what job they are doing heaven knows). Get rid of more useless council employees on inflated salaries (£98000+). Revive Hereford old town - currently plagued with dark doors & charity shops. Provide improved public transport links to and from Hereford city. Day and night. PS lastly!! Please stop doing these 'surveys' in summer when everyone is away and parish councils do not meet.</p>
<p>Yes, bring services in house, do not commission profit making companies at councils expense</p>
<p>Yes, by designing consultations that actually work, where are your budget proposals? This exercise is yet another waste of money. Save money by cancelling the High Town upgrade project. Bring back trees into High town and the centre of Hereford.</p>
<p>Yes, stop giving in to certain groups just because they shout the loudest. They certainly do not speak for the majority of the county, but a very tiny proportion. Stand by your convictions, instead of back tracking.</p>
<p>You have to make a stronger case to central Government about the unique challenges of the rural landscape in which we live. At the moment you actively discriminate against people who don't live in towns, but giving them either much poorer services, or none at all. This is unfair. You should strive harder to use the villages as an asset. They offer cheap accommodation for businesses, and a very can-do attitude among their residents. But they also need support. Poor families struggle to find work when there is so little public transport. There are no customer service centres in villages, to help poorer people access services and benefits. Yet people in similar circumstances that happen to live in towns, get access to a wide range of services and help. This is unfair, and needs to be addressed. Village populations are ageing fast, and while volunteers may be able to help now, in the next 5-10 years they will become too old to do so, and will be in need of services themselves. These short-sighted cuts exercises are leaving threadbare services that will not be able to cope in the future. You need to start take a longer-term approach.</p>

Chief Executive's Office

18 AUG 2016

Issued to:

Knownledged:

KINGTON TOWN COUNCIL



QUALITY
TOWN
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Mr. Alistair Neill
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Friday 16th January 2015

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL 2017/18 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Dear Mr. Neill,

Kington Town Council wishes to express its concern about the consultation that is being carried out by Herefordshire County Council in relation to its future budget. It will comment specifically on the budget proposals at a later date, but at this point wishes to note some issues in relation to the questionnaire that can be returned both by members of the public and by representatives of organisations.

Whilst the first page of the consultation document does have a side box which gives access to a range of documents, at no point does the main text suggest that people should read the Directorate Savings proposals document nor the other documents before completing the questionnaire. After one brief paragraph, you reach a box which says "Complete the online 2017/18 budget consultation questionnaire". We would suggest that most people are likely to go straight to the questionnaire without reading any of the documentation, which in any case is long and complex. This therefore means that many of the following questions are likely to be answered without due regard for the complex issues which lie behind the questions and the decisions that the council is likely to take in relation to its budget.

We would also like to comment specifically on the questions as asked in the document:

Town Clerk

Gwilym J. Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg

Question 1 is about charges for council services – it notes that the council already charges for a number of services, but does not say which ones. The question asks if the respondent is willing to support an increase in charges above the level of inflation – how can you answer this question without more information about what levels of charges are currently levied and which services could see increased charges? To find out this information requires close reading of documentation.

Question 2 asks about increase in council tax – but again, does not say on the form what an increase could fund or protect. Whilst a range of background documents are provided and can be accessed, how many respondents are likely to do this and therefore answer the question in an informed way?

Question 3 is about savings and asks for ideas – a write-in box. It requires the respondent to go back to the first page of the consultation and to know that to see proposed savings, you have to click on Directorate Savings Proposals. You then have to return to the questionnaire to continue. The Directorate Savings Proposals are quite long and complex.

Question 4 is where the problems really start. The question is posed with a lead-in that says that as part of last year’s consultation, over half of respondents thought that town and parish council, community groups or voluntary organisations could do more to help deliver services in their local community if Herefordshire Council reduced or stopped delivering a particular service. As this does not contextualise this with the information that any additional services could have an impact on the uncapped parish precept, nor recognise the services that towns and parishes already provide, this could be very misleading for respondents. Discussions with towns and parishes in advance of this list and this question would have been useful. The list includes many services that could not be undertaken without staffing and funding – such as libraries and leisure facilities, respite and day services, providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children, and bus services. Whilst the question as posed does note that “Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following”, there is not sufficient information provided to enable people to know what kind of additional charge, the costs of providing these types of services or the feasibility of town and parish councils providing these. Some services would also cut across town and parish boundaries and funding for service users outside of the town or parish boundary could be declared an ultra vires payment if challenged (for instance with bus services or libraries,) unless all relevant parishes in a locality were willing to increase their precept and contribute. We consider that it is very irresponsible of Herefordshire Council

Town Clerk
Gwilym J. Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg

to ask this question in this way without proper advance consultations and discussions with town and parish councils.

Question 5 is a very leading question, asking respondents if they already volunteer in Herefordshire.. Many people are unable to volunteer, for all kinds of reasons. To ask this kind of question in this consultation is potentially discriminatory and should not form part of this consultation. **Question 6** then goes on to ask people if they would be willing to volunteer in a wide variety of roles – including activities where either health and safety or safeguarding would be issues. In addition, as noted for question 4, most of these activities would require volunteers to be properly recruited, screened and vetted, trained and supported by paid staff. Volunteering is not a cost free activity. This could also raise expectations that all of these activities can be undertaken in this way. This again is a complex issue, which requires significant further discussion with town and parish councils, and with relevant organisations, particularly voluntary organisations that are already seeing their budgets cut and grants from various bodies harder to achieve.

The following questions about capital funding and support for business are not in themselves problematic, but in determining a environment for business development and the attraction of new business, the role of culture and the arts and the green environment have been completely overlooked. There are significantly more issues that create a good business and living environment than just those noted in **Question 7**.

As we have noted, Kington Town Council will comment in more detail on the specific budget proposals. We feel, however, that the consultation exercise will do little other than satisfy the requirement that Herefordshire Council has consulted, but as with other recent consultations, this is a meaningless exercise and we would hope that the Council would in future perhaps consult with town and parish councils as to appropriate ways to achieve more effective engagement of local communities in consultation on what are very specific issues that impact on the well-being of the county.

Yours Faithfully



Gwilym J. Rippon MILCM, Cert HE Ceg
Town Clerk

Town Clerk
Gwilym J.Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg



2017-18 Budget Consultation Response

Assumptions

We note that the working assumption is that the cap on general council tax uplift remains at 1.9% for 2017-18. We also note that a further 2% budget uplift is included in the budget to be ring-fenced to support the rising cost of Adult Social Care. However, it is not clear in the consultation documentation where this additional funding is represented in the figures. The supporting paperwork appears to be identical to the paperwork approved at last year's budget – to include all the same savings profiles contained in the MTFS at that time.

Grants and Local Government Act (1972) facilities

We are not able to see where the ~£4m of grants, including the Rural Services Support Grant, awarded immediately after approval of the 2016-17 budget and currently held in reserves, are being proposed to be spent. It is disappointing that with 6 months' notice the interim has not been used to make suggestions on how this grant funding might support service delivery into rural areas in time for such suggestions to be consulted upon here.

A significant proportion of last year's consultation respondents were amenable to paying more through their Council Tax to secure or improve services important to them at a local level: albeit that they had reservations regarding how such services would be agreed and their levels assured. This enthusiasm seems well matched to the facility provided by Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act: it is disappointing to be unable to find any assessment in the consultation of the parish funding which could be available under the Section 137 provisions for the support of agreed services.

This facility is a funding source that we have brought to officers' attention in previous years, and we would strongly encourage a serious consideration of this facility and the opportunity it presents to enable and encourage closer co-operative working amongst parishes. While central government continues to reduce the amount of national taxation redistributed through the core grants mechanisms, it is perverse to continue to ignore this source of local funding and the improved local government co-operation it could encourage.

Based on the August 2016 population figures for the county we have around 150,000 electors. At the 2016-17 S137 rate of £7.42 per elector, this gives a maximum of some £1.1m of parish funding which could be available for the support of non-statutory services delivered either cooperatively at parish level or cost effectively at county level, whichever is most appropriate. The opportunity has been missed to use 2016-17 to begin the conversation with parishes on the service mix and spread which may be appropriate for such funding support. We urge the administration to make a commitment now to begin this dialogue immediately, so as to explore the possibilities and acquire the consensus needed to make use of this source of funding in 2018-19.

Additional Savings: context and proposals

A savings programme has already been proposed which omits certain funding sources, mentioned above, and which also is behind in its delivery in some areas and overambitious or untargeted in others. IOC has maintained for a number of years that the budget for Herefordshire is, in reality, not balanced; and that savings targets in departments are sufficiently unclear in their detail to create the concern that they are used merely to give the appearance of a balanced budget.

Far from being motivational for staff, unrealistic or unattributed savings targets give the impression that a budget is never truly something on which delivery is expected. Neither is it encouraging for particular areas of the council's business repeatedly to be required to make additional in-year savings to bail out those parts of the council's business which have been assigned unachievable savings at the start of the year: a culture of perennial overspend, and/or perennial plundering in various parts of the council's business, is corrosive and ultimately undermines the necessity for culture and behaviour change.

Elsewhere these in-year unbudgeted savings risk impacting on investment programmes essential to the enablement of new ways of working when these become delayed and cut to compensate in-year pressures. This also risks preventing or delaying the service re-engineering necessary to deliver savings. Projects like Digital Channels and the improvement of the council's website are critical to the delivery of service and behaviour change. Additional savings and increased income could come from the council focussing on information handling and knowledge management for the county, its partners and the voluntary and third sector organisations seen as core to new service models across all departments and stakeholder webs.

Is the council compliant with its own income and charging guidelines, adopted in 2011/12? What priority is being given to creating the understanding of service delivery costs which would enable charging tariffs to be developed for parishes and individual residents to consider? It's hardly surprising that people/parishes are reluctant to commission works which come with unspecified or open-ended liability: re-painting of road markings, traffic regulation orders, gully sucking and drain clearance, residents' parking zones, replacement local/road signage are a few examples of work which could be funded locally if the costs were properly understood.

Other proposals include:

- Using the council tax collection system to enable individuals and/or larger groups of properties to buy additional services and spread their payments.
- Offering a chargeable green/garden waste collection service in urban areas for re-cycling/composting (rather than going to landfill), particularly in the south of the county close to the green waste facility just over the Gloucestershire border.
- Deploying ubiquitous technology and evolving social business networks to change the way in which services are made available (assuming sufficient all-county broadband coverage), for example:
 - Real time GPS on public transport linked to mobile phone apps, showing the exact location of buses (which could be linked to smart messaging signs at bus stops and the opportunity for income from advertising that reacts to and targets users in its Bluetooth bubbles) would negate the need for published bus route timetables. GPS would enable smaller operators to enter the market and to upload their travel route – or even for them to deliver 'doorstep services' in rural areas.

- UBER offers a new model for urban minicabs/taxis: the technology could also enable people, as part of the 'Choose how you move' programme, to register to provide flexible taxi services in rural areas where reduced bus services are expensive and inflexible. The UBER model would enable local people known in their own communities to be paid for transport services as if they were Community Transport drivers.

Further savings could be made from a more joined-up view of how we use the 'assets' the council already has at its disposal.

- Library and Customer Service centres are the ideal points at which to base signposting and wellbeing hubs for Adults' and Children's Wellbeing, and for our healthcare partners. Significant investment is required in these directorates and partner organisations to deliver preventative programmes and behaviour change. Customer Service & Library staff members are good sources of knowledge and data, and are well networked in their local communities. They already have the skills and knowledge to match well with the CWB/ASC messaging and would also be able to deal with the wide range of issues and problems which might involve other advice areas and partner services.
- Cultural centres (theatres/museums) can act similarly as hubs for such service provision and signposting, with advisors doubling up as front desk for these services.
- Most Town Councils already run a reception desk/enquiry point, the cost of which could be shared with Customer Services and a wellbeing hub, offering the potential for space sharing, savings in operating costs and additional revenue from the repurposing of existing office space.

The implementation of advice and signposting services can be flexibly deployed to match the locality need and best options for the physical access points in each community. These Centres can be hubs for Neighbourhood Networks of Community Champions – providing support and contact services in their immediate localities – from good neighbourliness through to regular shopping, prescription or other care services.

All parishes have been challenged to provide these neighbour volunteers, but such support networks will need to include income-generating services in order to be stable and viable. The council should be looking to provide payment or support to enable some of the services to be provided. It is not realistic to expect that these support activities will be sustainable without some element of funding – although this can come in part from the beneficiary through personal budgets etc.

Treating the provision and marketing of excellent and attractive specialist respite care services should be an important part of the council's investment in prevention and pipeline management. Making those services available for part/full payment for non-qualifying families enables the cost to be spread across the year or shared amongst family members, with collection through the council tax system.

Additional Parish Service Delivery

There needs to be fully co-ordinated effort to enable parish dialogue on this matter. Not all of the options offered in Section 4 of the questionnaire seem suitable for parish level delivery.

Activities suitable for wholesale parish devolution would appear to include:

- Maintaining communal green spaces (parks, playgrounds, sports pitches)
- Grass and hedge cutting
- Litter and dog fouling enforcement

- Good Neighbour schemes

Activities which would involve some level of parish action, but which would also require continued county council involvements would appear to include:

- Road/footpath maintenance
- Libraries, museums and leisure facilities
- Customer contact & advice
- Winter services (gritting, clearing roads/pathways)
- Helping out in emergencies

Herefordshire Council should return the ownership of the city and market town car parks to these parishes to create income-generating assets to contribute to the cost of taking on the above services. This would be appropriate since there is a direct correlation between visitor numbers to these urban centres, use of services, and car park usage. If section 137 monies were not to be utilised to spread service delivery costs amongst locality parishes, then return of the car parks to the urban parishes they serve would ensure that the parish carrying their cost would have income derived from visitors, thus ensuring that the entire costs are not borne solely by the residents of the parish.

Activities for which we believe it would be difficult for most parishes to deliver effective action due to the complicated nature of the services involved:

- Respite and Day Care
- Bus Service
- Providing activities for babies and pre-school children

Volunteering

The gaps that open up in Herefordshire's social structure cannot be expected to be plugged solely with volunteers. The council's own Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that ~34% of local residents already volunteer on a regular basis: with the percentage of the elderly, infirm, and children in the county, 34% must be close to saturation point for volunteering.

The council could, and should, be providing more support to voluntary and third sector organisations, and to have a policy to look to place contracts for care and support work with local charity-based businesses so that the funding remains focussed on service delivery and not on shareholder profits. Encouraging local employers to implement volunteering programmes and to support local charities and projects with the time their staff donate would also help to expand the voluntary sector into local business, and to extend and focus social responsibility initiatives within the county.

Attracting New Business

The focus should be on building on the county's strengths, on recognising what's special and different about Herefordshire and aligning all the council's resources to maximise the benefits these differences bring. Herefordshire is an attractive location for people who want to balance quality of life with business.

The visitor economy needs focussed support. Budget hotels for business and pleasure should be provided throughout the county so that people can afford to visit and to stay. Business parks should

be invested in to be brought forward in all the market towns. No large-scale housing development should be allowed to come forward without also providing local employment sites.

Other considerations and proposals

The Economic Master Plan for the county should balance emphasis across the city, the market towns and rural areas. Broadband should be implemented to provide excellent upload and download speed in all areas to enable small businesses to operate in village locations and for the growth of the homeworking economy. The creative industries – including IT, computer programming and gaming - should be encouraged to relocate to the county. However the emphasis should be on helping existing businesses to expand while remaining here in Herefordshire.

Our AONBs and the River Wye SAC should be treated with care and sympathy as regards both development and the growth of industrial forms of agriculture. The rivers should be properly strategized as assets and access to them and care of them should be a priority.

Investment in the maintenance of existing road infrastructure should be the priority with the emphasis being on footpath and cycleway development in the rural areas to safely and sustainably link hamlets to villages and villages to towns. Cycle-tracks and bridleways on former railway routes should be instated and the towpath of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal should be re-instated ahead of the canal sections to create the movement route for people to begin to use this asset and to increase visibility of and commitment to the strategic project.

A light rail/maglev/monorail link from Hereford Station to the Enterprise Zone should be committed to in advance of road projects, and alongside a light tram system in the city. Railtrack and Network Rail should be engaged with and encouraged to re-instate the halts and request stops at villages along the railway lines running through the county, thereby encouraging and enabling development along these transport links from the east, southwest and north.

High Schools in the market towns should be encouraged to provide access to out of hours training facilities in half terms and holidays to businesses and link to the NMITE university project in the city to provide satellite resources and training portals to augment university facilities and to strengthen links to the local business community.

Capital Investments

Priorities should include:

- Bringing forward employment sites in the market towns, and enabling road infrastructure, e.g. at Leominster, Ledbury and Bromyard, to serve these sites.
- Developing light rail and tram systems in the city, along with the extension and connection of the cycle and footpath networks throughout the county.
- Enabling pay car parks at schools to generate revenue in holiday periods.
- Extending the electric car charging point network and supporting new car pool/club schemes in towns and villages.
- Investing in GPS bus services, and a 'bus pass with benefits' scheme to encourage use of buses by under- 65s and to generate revenue from business offers and advertising. Investment in, or franchising of, smart signage/advertising at community message boards, hubs and bus stops.
- Providing free Wi-Fi zones in all the town centres – for council and parish notification or messaging and revenue from local business advertising.

October 2016

Bus Services Review Herefordshire 18 July - 16 Oct 2016.

As Most of the Herefordshire Public know all these Council Questionnaires Accomplish NOTHING They are just to make on the Councilors the Council Staff have some thing to do Have any of the matters raised in the many public meeting ever been enacted.

Have Your Say Budget Consultation July 2016 PO Box 4 HR4 0BR

- 1 The people on high Council Tax bands should pay the increases NOT those on Band A and B The public have had more than enough Consultations they only confirm the party political Solve Nothing
- 2 All English Councils can get ALL The Money they need to spend wisely or waste Ask The Commons for some of their unending Quantitative Easing It seems they can help the rich Financiers the Banks lets see them do something likewise for the English Poorer People.
- 3 These services so far Thank God are not applicable to me have to manage on basic state pension with the single Council Tax Deduction They do not say how many respondents there were 50% of what how many grown ups live in the County they don't know like the total amount in England
- 4 No extra charges for any of these listed activities The present high Council Income Tax other taxes are enough see the people employed do the work the public see so many one working others standing watching even enjoy radio entertainment to pass the idle time
- 5 Have one foot in the grave enough on looking after myself others should do the same but they are state Council benefit fed
- 6 Have no time for any of these worthy causes as fully committed seven days a week to stay alive
Supporting growth businesses and employment training The commercial rates overheads are too high most shops have accommodation space above which should be used for domestic life These out of town industrial estates are too far for employees to walk to work too generous in their site areas England cannot afford this ongoing ever increasing loss of productive land.
The boulevards around the old cattle market have not solved the delays when they were held an overhead roadway for the traffic was the correct answer now they have cleared site near Morrison / Rail Stn cut down again Old trees this ring road will only produce more and more killer fumes for the children. When the Councils their planners cannot put in place a simple one way system (half of which has now been enacted possibly by the Greens looking for their votes) for Leominster huge hold ups in this one horse town Can they put Hereford City traffic problems to right like you can catch lines of queues out of the river Severn
- 7 Everyone who has to travel to these new out of town businesses and accommodations should only be allowed to use public transport or their own sweat This is how all Councils MP PS should be made to function Unskilled workers all out of work shall do all the jobs listed for their benefits Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall showed everyone how 21st domestic accommodations can be built with roads on three levels as it is in Sweden

They stopped the 492 service Leo to had so all who could made other arrangements The service was brought back as 490 but the people who had to make other arrangements never came back Every decent person knows Once you loose a customer you very rarely get them back was this service stoppage done in order to kill off it few-needed passengers so close that it was a waste of money.

These buses run miles from the main direct road into villages where mostly they never pick up or drop anyone off These few people should walk to the stop on the main road

This Bus Co claim they carry out the Councils plan but it looks like most drivers run it for themselves especially once they have been here for a while The public do not know what it cost to run the services whether the subsidies cover the cost plus a profit or all the fare payers cash is profit. Did the Council claim they carry out The Government policy so OAP Concession pass use only after 0930 yet apparently Moulton Bucks the time is 0900 the OAP Con Pass should be used from earliest service to last in Rural Areas so less confusion on such as 492 1000 hrs ad bus returning to Ross from Hereford could have a few passengers.

How does The Stage Coach £5 all day anywhere shape up on the subsidy per passenger rates from £1 scale to £10

The Media have never shown these empty near-empty buses which are run at public price costs These buses will ALWAYS run as long as the MPS Councillors can milk the tax payers Christian value of efficiency economy don't enter this country's rules life

In previous consultations some people with OAP Concessionary bus passes they would be prepared to pay a fare rather than travel for free (This for free shows how these Authorities Councillors think The Concess OAP Bus Pass is NOT FREE The public pay Council Tax & other taxes for this then will these people Let The TRUTH)

We don't know how many people replied to these reviews 15 out of total population of OAPS in Herefordshire (The Government DO NOT know how many people live in UK) in Q10 of 18 July 16 Oct 2016 subsidy figure £1.00 to £10.00 but they do not say these willing to pay OAP alongside their proposed payment figure how many times per week they are going to use the service. So what true picture can any decent person set from any figures quoted in Q10.

5th Sept 2016 The 490 1242 never came to had Ann Ross Mill St through was there from 1230 Another passenger for Orleton at 1310 said they would have to get a taxi which they did because they had their Mother's lunch part frozen (probably ice cream) We noted (NOT there last week) that some time tables in bus shelters both undated one of these said 490 would leave at 1220 whether this took place of NOT don't know or how many passengers were aboard. The above Orleton passenger said NO new bus times were on display on their bus stop post there There was NO such on the buses I used all the time and NO such New Bus Timetable at Leo Bus Stop or in Hereford Do NOT think I will be on the 490 Leo to had from now Most OAPS pay high Council Taxes to subsidies these empty near empty buses their drivers are mostly Polish Are most OAPS subsidising in Polish State are the Police The Fraud Squad goes to find out if the 490 at 1220 and the 1242 that never reached Mill St had ever ran and if public subsidies were paid for this then more service

Copy To. Budget Consultation July 2016 as per 9

Email response from a resident

“With spending cuts the rural appearance is deteriorating.

There is a wealth of people who, if organised, could help in correcting this situation. A constant excuse is Health and Safety and Insurance. Yet the type of person who would volunteer would sign a waiver form to alleviate this problem.

The Council should employ a coordinator of volunteers. Once a requirement is established volunteers should be requested from a pool of established volunteer.

The council would need to remove any waste following the completion of the task.”

<name removed>

Email from Weobley parish council:

Dear Sirs,

In response to your Budget Consultation we note that there appears to be much emphasis on options for service provision through funding via Parish Precepts or volunteering. We would like to point out that a considerable amount of this already takes place on our Parish.

The Parish Council already provides funds via its precept to support;

The Parish Lengthsman Scheme
The Community Library
Maintenance of the village Play Area

in addition our Community volunteers help with:

Litter Picking
Interim grass cutting between scheduled cuts by the Local Authority
Grass cutting and maintenance at the local Play Area
Footpath maintenance
Community Library and Museum
Pre-school activities
Meals on Wheels
Community Wheels
amongst many other community activities.

It's likely that other Parishes could report similarly. We are very fortunate to have such a supportive community but it is concerning that we and they may be expected to contribute much more as suggested by your survey questions.

Regards
Lorraine Anderson, Chair
Weobley Parish Council

Email from Cusop parish council:

“Cusop Parish Council considered the budget consultation at its last meeting and agreed that it valued the public services provided by Herefordshire Council but did not feel able to give a qualified response given the technical complexities of the breakdown of the budget.”

Best wishes

Ian Jardin
Cusop Parish Clerk

Budget Consultation – July 2016

Each year, Herefordshire Council asks residents to help shape the way its budgets are set. We will need to be even more efficient and effective to protect priority services and continue to support our county's vulnerable residents, whilst ensuring that Herefordshire remains a great place to live, work and learn.

Our priorities for Herefordshire are:

- enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives;
- keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life;
- support the growth of our economy; and
- secure better services, quality of life and value for money

Herefordshire Council has saved over £59 million over the past six years. We must deliver further savings in order to balance our budget between now and 2019/20. We are working to develop a one Herefordshire approach with the NHS, Police, Fire and other public sector organisations in the county to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

We want to hear what council services you would want to protect and any ways in which you might be able to help us in enabling community services to continue. We also want to hear ideas on how we can improve – perhaps by using new technology, changing the way we do things, or by working with other organisations, community groups, or charities.

It's quick and easy to fill out online or if you have any more ideas, tweet us at #hfdsbudget or send us a facebook message. You can also share your views with your local councillor or parish council.

We are also running a number of consultations that may be of particular interest to those people who are currently receiving council services. More details can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/current-consultations. Further and more focused consultation may be required with groups directly affected by any anticipated changes.

The budget consultation runs from Friday 29 July 2016 to Friday 7 October 2016.

All responses will be collated, analysed and published. All individual responses will be anonymised, and responses on behalf of an organisation will have comments attributed to them in the final report. The feedback received will inform Cabinet's decision making on the draft budget. This will be proposed to Full Council in February 2017.

Budget consultation 2016

29 July - 7 October

The council already charges for a number of services. The majority (71%) of respondents to last year's consultation thought that the council should increase service charges to protect current services across the county.

1. Are you willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation?

- Yes No

Every additional 1% increase in council tax raises around £0.9 million. We have already factored in a 1.9% increase to take account of general inflation, plus the Government is allowing us to increase council tax by an additional 2% to support the rising cost of social care. Given our ageing population and pressures in this area we intend to take them up on this offer. The current band D charge for Herefordshire Council services is £1,325 and so a 3.9% increase will cost the average council taxpayer an extra £52 per year. If these increases are not levied, additional savings will be required.

Next year our budget plans include £7 million of savings. Increasing council tax could help Herefordshire Council to support its services and reduce the amount of savings required. If we wanted to raise council tax above the 3.9% level, we would be required to hold a countywide referendum (which would cost approximately £300,000), where we ask residents to say whether they're for or against the proposal.

2. Would you support Herefordshire Council in making a further increase in council tax above 3.9%, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds?

- No - £7 million savings still required
- Yes - raise an estimated £2 million by increasing council tax by a total of 6.1% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £81 in 2017/18)
- Yes - raise an estimated £4 million by increasing council tax by a total of 8.3% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £110 in 2017/18)
- Yes - raise an estimated £7 million by increasing council tax by a total of 11.7% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £155 in 2017/18)

Herefordshire Council is considering its future plans, along with budget and council tax levels for next year, and would like your views. We remain committed to delivering services you need in a way that offers both value for money and protects services for those who are most in need. The challenge we have is how we can do this with less funding.

Our current savings proposals total £28.4 million between this year and 2019/20. For more detailed information on the savings proposals, medium term financial strategy and Corporate Plan, see www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings?

The council provides a wide variety of services to people in Herefordshire, particularly to those who are vulnerable and have complex needs. As more pressure is placed on the council's budget, and on the budgets of partner organisations, different ways of delivering these services need to be developed.

As part of last year's consultation, over half of respondents (58%) thought that town and parish councils, community groups or voluntary organisations could do more to help deliver services in their local community if Herefordshire Council reduces or stops delivering a particular service.

4. Respondents to last year's consultation suggested a number of activities that could be undertaken locally. Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following?

(please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Grass / hedge cutting</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Customer contact centre and advice</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Litter / dog fouling enforcement</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Road / footpath maintenance</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bus service</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Helping out in emergencies</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Libraries / museums / leisure facilities</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (please specify below)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Respite and day service</i> | |

Volunteering means giving unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations. It includes anything that you take part in, support, or help in any way, either on your own or with others. For example, helping at a youth or day centre, helping to run an event, campaigning or doing administrative work. It does not include giving money or anything that is a requirement of your job.

5. Do you currently volunteer in Herefordshire?

Yes

No

6. People have previously indicated that they would be willing to help out more in their community. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles.

(please tick all that apply)

	<i>Already volunteer</i>	<i>Interested in volunteering</i>
<i>Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Grass / hedge cutting</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Litter picking</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Footpath maintenance</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Community transport</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Car sharing</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Buddy scheme (e.g. befriending or mentoring someone)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Respite and day service</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping families who need help to look after their children (e.g. where parents may need a lot of medical treatment)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping provide activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping out in emergencies</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Other (please specify below)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Supporting the growth of our economy is one of the council's strategic priorities. We want Herefordshire to be a place where businesses want to settle and can flourish. We also want our city and town centres to be vibrant and successful and our neighbourhoods to be attractive and sustainable. The county is already home to a wide range of businesses and we will continue to support and encourage the growth of our high value business sector and our small enterprises.

At the same time, we want to encourage a broad mix of businesses that will offer employment and training to local people. We also want to make sure residents, particularly young people, have the right skills needed for local employers. In doing this we want to achieve a sustainable infrastructure that protects and promotes the natural environment, communities and the county's economy.

7. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Improve infrastructure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Enable new housing development</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Upskill workers</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (please specify below)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Access to funding and business support</i> | |

Herefordshire Council has funding which enables us to invest in and maintain assets across the county, as well as deliver new projects and infrastructure which support the local economy and help maintain public services.

The capital programme has an estimated spend of £51 million for 2017/18.

Projects include targeted capital investment to:

- Attract and secure inward investment;
- Create jobs and get local people into work;
- Improve school buildings to help with educational attainment;
- Improve connectivity through road improvements;
- Provide better broadband connectivity;
- Enable new housing development; and
- Sustain key local services.

More detailed information on the capital programme can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

Any additional projects will need to be paid for. For example, through an increase in council tax or business rates, the sale of council buildings / land, or grant funding.

8. Is there any other capital investment you think the council should make?

9. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding how we could deliver services in a different way?

About you

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or group, or as an individual?

- Organisation or group Individual

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or group please tell us the name of the organisation/group:

If you are responding as an individual please answer the following questions about yourself. This information helps us to understand the profile of respondents and whether views vary amongst different groups of people across the county. It will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring, treated as confidential and not used to identify you.

What is your postcode?

(not including the last 2 letters, e.g. HR4 0)

What is your gender?

- Male Female

What is your age band?

- 0-15 years 25-44 years 65-74 years
 16-24 years 45-64 years 75+ years

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes - limited a little Yes - limited a lot No

How would you describe your national identity? (tick all that apply)

- English Scottish Welsh
 Northern Irish British Irish
 Other

If Other please specify:

How would you describe your ethnic group?

- White British/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish
 Other White (please specify below)
 Any other ethnic group (please specify below)

If Other White please specify:

If Any other ethnic group please specify:

Do you feel that the council has treated you differently (positively or negatively) because of who you are? (e.g. your gender, age, disability or ethnicity)

- Yes No

If yes, please specify:

Data Protection Act 1998

The data collected in this form will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring. This information will only be retained for as long as is considered necessary for monitoring purposes and then it will be destroyed. At all times it will be kept in accordance with the Act.

Thank you for your time

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay, but completed hard copies can be sent to: Herefordshire Council Research Team, Freepost SWC4816, PO Box 4, Hereford, HR4 0BR